

# Regional policy dialogue on Aichi Target 11 and beyond

## Roadmap for South Asia sub-region

4 November 2020 | 15:00 – 19:00 NPT (UTC +5:45)  
Microsoft Teams (online)

### SECTION 1

## Background

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011–2020), adopted by the State of Parties through the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 2010, is a ten-year global framework for action by all countries and stakeholders to conserve biodiversity and enhance benefits for people. The plan has 20 targets, known as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, which serve as a flexible framework for the establishment of national and regional targets for effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Among the 20 Aichi targets, Aichi Target 11 focuses on the conservation of areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services through protected areas (PA) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECM). It comprises two quantitative and seven qualitative elements that member countries are obliged to achieve. CBD has grouped all parties or member countries into 12 sub-regions. The South Asia sub-region includes nine member countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Effective coordination, communication, and knowledge sharing among the member countries

in the sub-region is vital for the timely achievement of the targets and deliverables. A collective effort is needed to achieve the targets within the given timeframe of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011–2020). In this regard, capacity building of member countries is crucial for ensuring appropriate initiatives are carried out on time. Further, it is important to review progress, share learnings, analyse challenges, and discuss a way forward prior to the 15th Conference of Parties to CBD (CBD CoP15), to be held in 2021.

The CBD Secretariat has assigned the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) to help speed up the implementation of all priority actions and achievement of the targets in the South Asia sub-region. ICIMOD organized a regional policy dialogue titled “Aichi Target 11 and beyond: Roadmap for South Asia sub-region” on 4 November 2020, in collaboration with UNDP India and the CBD Secretariat, with generous financial support from the Japan Biodiversity Fund. The dialogue helped the participants document the progress and share learnings on Aichi Target 11 of the sub-region.

The event was attended by 40 delegates from eight out of the nine South Asian countries including government officials and CBD national focal points. Shakti Bahadur Basnet, Minister of Forests and

Environment, Nepal, provided special remarks as the chief guest, while Pema Gyamtsho, Director General, ICIMOD; Sarat Babu Gidda, Head of Biodiversity Science, Policy and Governance Unit, and Senior Programme Management Officer, CBD Secretariat; and Ruchi Pant, Head, Natural Resource Management and Biodiversity, UNDP India chaired different sessions and offered remarks showing commitment towards achieving Aichi Target 11. Along with the CBD National Focal Points of eight South Asian countries, ICIMOD's board member from Afghanistan, the Secretary from the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Bangladesh, and representatives of the CBD Secretariat, conservation organizations and ICIMOD took part in the event.

## Objectives

The virtual policy dialogue aimed to bring parties of the South Asia sub-region together to share updates on the progress made on Aichi Target 11 and facilitate discussion on the topic. The specific objectives were to:

- Review progress, share learnings, and analyze challenges in achieving Aichi Target 11 in the South Asia sub-region
- Discuss the agenda for CBD CoP15 and a way forward for conservation of protected areas and OECMs beyond 2020
- Identify needs and opportunities for technical and financial support and strategies to build alliances with funding and knowledge partners for capacity building and sustainable funding

## Outcomes

- Progress against global Aichi Target 11 and corresponding national targets reviewed, lessons learned shared, and good practices adopted by parties compiled
- Gaps, challenges, and opportunities for strengthening technical capacity and financing mechanism known, and needs and priorities identified
- Views of parties regarding the agenda for CoP15 and post-2020 protected areas and OECM conservation and management strategies documented

## SECTION 2

# Opening session

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**Sunita Chaudhary**, ICIMOD, started the dialogue by welcoming the delegates from the South Asia sub-region and representatives of different organizations from across the world including the CBD Secretariat. She acknowledged the presence of Minister Shakti Bahadur Basnet, Ministry of Forest and Environment (MoFE), Government of Nepal (GoN), as the chief guest of the event. Highlighting the objectives of the dialogue, she emphasized the unique opportunity to share the progress, learning and challenges related to Aichi Target 11 in the South Asian countries. She highlighted the expected outcomes of the dialogue.

## Welcome remarks

**Pema Gyamtsho**, Director General of ICIMOD, welcomed all the participants and provided an overview of the dialogue and its importance in the context of the HKH region. The key highlights are as follows:

## Highlights

- ICIMOD, an intergovernmental regional knowledge centre, has been working in the Hindu Kush Himalaya region (HKH) for the last three decades. ICIMOD's core mandate is biodiversity conservation and ecosystem protection and it is committed to sustainable resources management in the region.
- Enhancing ecosystem resilience was one of the six urgent HKH calls to action made during the Ministerial Summit on 15 October 2020, when the regional member countries committed to supporting sustainable conservation and management of biodiversity in the region.
- Being an observer to the CBD and a partner in the implementation of Aichi Target 11 in South Asia, ICIMOD is honoured to contribute to the objectives of the CBD.
- Aichi Target 11 is important to the region, which is exceptionally rich in cultural assets and biological diversity. However, the region is facing different threats including the impacts of climate change.
- To protect biodiversity, all the member countries should be strongly committed towards achieving Aichi target 11 by the end of 2020.
- ICIMOD is and will continue to be committed towards sustainable management of ecosystems

and biodiversity and ensuring the sustainable flow of ecosystem services by promoting transboundary cooperation for landscapes and river basins of the HKH.

## Keynote presentation on biodiversity conservation and ICIMOD's engagement in the HKH

Eklabya Sharma, Deputy Director General, ICIMOD, presented on the importance of biodiversity conservation and ICIMOD's engagement in the HKH region. He highlighted that six out of the nine South Asian countries share the HKH boundary. There is an urgent need for regional cooperation to protect the rich biodiversity and ecosystem services of the HKH region.

### Highlights

- Mountains are home to 915 million people, and 1/8th of the world's population lives in the mountains. More than 50% of the world's population depends on goods and services from the mountains.
- Mountains support 25% of the world's terrestrial biodiversity and include nearly half of the world's biodiversity hotspots.
- The HKH is home to diverse cultures and traditional knowledge systems with more than 1,000 living languages. The region has major bioclimatic zones with high biodiversity and endemism. It hosts four global biodiversity hotspots and 330 important bird and key biodiversity areas. It is known as the Third Pole as the region has the largest reserves of ice outside the polar region. The HKH region is called "the pulse of the planet"; if something happens in the HKH region, especially in terms of climate change, the whole world could be affected.
- About 35% of the world population benefits indirectly from resources and ecosystem services provided by the HKH.
- According to the [HKH Assessment \(HIMAP\) report](#), about 70–80% of the original habitats in the HKH have already been lost, and the projection shows that one-fourth of the endemic species in the Indian Himalayas could be wiped out by 2100.
- The number and area of Protected Areas (PAs) have significantly increased from 1918 to 2019.
- "Conservation through entrepreneurship" is an approach that helps us achieve development through the marketing and promotion of nature-based products such as Cordyceps tea and yacon syrup.

- Connectivity corridors are the areas where Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) can be developed and nurtured. This can play a huge role in connecting PAs and building resilience of species to combat the impacts of climate change.

## Remarks and presentation on the current status, gaps, and opportunities of Aichi Target 11 at the global level

Sarat Babu Gidda, Senior Programme Officer, CBD Secretariat, said that the dialogue would enable participants to gather information on the current status, gaps and opportunities on Aichi Target 11 from each country of the sub-region. He requested all the countries to update the information on Protected Areas and OECMs in UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre WCMC (WCMC)'s World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and World Database on OECM (WD-OECMs) by the end of December 2020. This would help in global assessments of Aichi Target 11 to be reported during CBD CoP 15 in 2021.

### Highlights

- Aichi Target 11 has nine elements comprising two quantitative and seven qualitative elements, which can be achieved through two conduits – PAs and OECMs. The main objective of the meeting was to provide an update on the status of each element of Aichi Target 11 to present the latest information at CBD CoP15.
- Sixth National Reports and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs) have been submitted by all the nine South Asian countries to the Secretariat of the CBD.
- At the global level, Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) with its different subsets like the Alliance for Zero Extinction Sites (AZEs) and Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) are important for conserving biodiversity.
- In terms of ecological representation, 43 terrestrial ecological regions and 8 marine ecoregions still have less than 10% PA coverage globally. To meet this gap, updating WDPA and reporting OECMs to WDPA is important and will help in assessing the progress towards Aichi target 11 by 2020.
- As the developing countries required funding and capacity development for progress on Aichi Target 11, GEF-5, GEF-6 and GEF-7 STAR Biodiversity Allocations were made to fund biodiversity conservation projects in different countries.

## Remarks from the United Nations Development Programme, India

On behalf of UNDP India, **Ruchi Pant**, Head, Natural Resource Management and Biodiversity, UNDP India warmly welcomed the CBD National Focal Points and other government officials, and colleagues from ICIMOD. She underscored the importance of the regional dialogue, where countries aimed to share their progress towards achieving Aichi Target 11, learn from each other, and see what simple actions could be taken in the next four to six weeks to enhance their respective contributions to Target 11. She also noted that any action taken now towards achieving Target 11 can help countries address all the elements of the proposed Target 2 of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

### Highlights

- As one of the coordinators of the CBD's South Asia Network for Target 11, UNDP's role has been to build capacities, foster dialogue and experience sharing among policy makers, practitioners, and experts within the region to achieve Target 11 in a coherent, mutually supportive, and decentralized manner.
- While reviewing country roadmaps for Target 11 and the Sixth National Reports submitted by the countries to the CBD, it has been observed that many countries have not updated their PA coverage in the WCMC's World Database on Protected Areas. UNDP offered to share experiences from India on how more area can be brought under PA coverage by using the IUCN PA categories.
- UNDP is supporting the Government of India in identifying, mapping and reporting OECMs. India Biodiversity Awards, an innovative tool, has identified a vast repository of nature-based solutions. The awards help validate and give recognition to potential OECMs. UNDP offered its support in designing and setting up such Awards in any country upon request.
- UNDP along with the National Biodiversity Authority of India and UNEP WCMC is soon organizing a tutorial session to create a pool of experts in India to help the government report to the World Database on OECMs. This pool of experts can be made available to other countries to guide them in filling the WD-OECM Templates.
- ICIMOD, in collaboration with UNDP, is also collating good practices on PA management and OECMs from countries in the South Asia network. These good practices will be published as a compendium, which will serve as a knowledge

product for future reference of all CBD member countries, and help replicate or scale up actions to meet the post-2020 targets. The compendium will be released at a suitable global event in the presence of all South Asian countries in the Target 11 Network.

### Special remarks

Nepal's Forest Minister **Shakti Bahadur Basnet** offered special remarks on the country's biodiversity status and its commitment to achieving Aichi Target 11. Natural resources available in South Asian countries contribute to the prosperity and well-being of their populations. He acknowledged the different countries' efforts in biodiversity conservation in the sub-region and reiterated Nepal's commitment to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a particular emphasis on Aichi Target 11 of the CBD.

### Highlights

- Nepal has achieved significant positive results in its conservation efforts through policies and institutional arrangements that ensure community engagement and benefit sharing, and through the development of corridors and bottlenecks to connect large PAs.
- Nepal has made significant progress in PA where 23.39% of its land is under PA system. The coverage is far above the global average of 15% and Aichi Target 11. In addition, buffer zone has been declared around the PA ensuring community participation in protected area management.
- Strengthening the bilateral relationship and cooperation between neighbouring countries is important for fulfilling global commitments.
- The Government of Nepal has committed to contributing to access and benefit sharing mechanisms, and to supporting ICIMOD's initiatives – including the flagship transboundary landscape initiatives in the Kailash Sacred Landscape and the Kangchenjunga Landscape, and the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) initiative. The government is committed to the HKH Call for Action for sustainable mountain development in the country as well as in the region.

## Sessions I and II

### Country presentations on the status of Aichi Target 11: Progress, challenges, and future plans

In these sessions, the National Focal Points for the CBD from all the countries of the sub-region presented the status of Aichi target 11 by highlighting the progress made, challenges and future plans for achieving Aichi Target 11.

#### AFGHANISTAN

**Mohammad Rafi Qazizadah**, Director General, Natural Resource Management (NRM), Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), shared the progress, challenges and future plans for achieving Aichi target 11. In his presentation, he highlighted that Afghanistan has been experiencing changes driven by climate change, disaster, economic growth, land use change, migration and urbanization, and this will continue to have significant consequences not only for PAs and biodiversity, but also for people living in the region. He highlighted the need to strengthen the capacity of academia and research institutes, enhance knowledge generation and promote good practices in protected areas in the country.

#### Highlights

- Based on the CBD's decision, Afghanistan developed a National Protected Area System Plan. Afghanistan is determined to effectively protect at least 2% of its land by 2015 and at least 10% of land comprising different ecoregions by 2030.
- The Government of Afghanistan endorsed the NBSAP (2011–2020) in which Target 1 aligns with Aichi Target 11 as it focuses on the effective conservation of 10% of ecoregion, restoration of the threatened species and conservation of genetic diversity.
- About 4.54% of the country's total area has been declared PA and about 6.28% of the total country area has been declared IBAs including both PAs and proposed PAs.
- Paghman Mountain has been categorized as an AZE site as it is a critical habitat of Paghman Salamander.

- Political commitment among high-level decision-makers and community willingness is important for the protection of natural resources in the country. The country also provides a huge opportunity for further research and studies on biodiversity.
- Afghanistan plans to revise the NBSAP and the National Protected Area System Plan.

#### BANGLADESH

**Ziaul Hasan**, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bangladesh Secretariat, and **Mohammed Solaiman Haider**, Director, Department of Environment, Dhaka, Bangladesh, presented the status of Aichi Target 11 of Bangladesh. In their presentation, they shared that Bangladesh has set National Target 11 under the NBSAP in line with Aichi Target 11. National Target 11 states that 3% of the country's total area will be under terrestrial ecosystem (forests), 3% area will be under inland wetlands and coastal ecosystems, and 5% of the total marine area will come under PAs or Ecologically Critical Areas (ECAs) with the development and implementation of the Management Plans by 2021.

#### Highlights

- Bangladesh has prepared the NBSAP for 2016–2021 by revising and updating the NBSAP (2004–2009).
- About 6% of the country's terrestrial area has been declared as PAs including ECAs, and about 5% of the country's marine area has been declared as marine protected areas.
- Bangladesh has declared 47 terrestrial PAs covering an area of 4,626 square kilometers.
- Additionally, the country has 13 coastal and inland wetlands ECAs; they cover an area of 698 km<sup>2</sup>.
- The budget from GEF-5 allocation was used to expand the PA system to incorporate important aquatic ecosystems for dolphin conservation whereas the budget from GEF-6 allocation has been used for ecosystem-based management of ecologically critical areas (the latter initiative has just started). GEF-7 allocation has been devoted to a project on Tanguar Haor ECAs.
- The country has been working on PAs and ECAs for the last three decades through different projects and development initiatives such as the formation of Village Conservation Groups, co-management committees in PAs, and Village Common Forest Committees.

- Bangladesh is planning to bring community-based conservation areas like the Village Common Forest under OECMs in order to include them in the total PA coverage.
- The prime minister of Bangladesh has identified biodiversity and nature-based solutions as one of the priorities of the country. PAs have been incorporated into different national plans and policies.
- Population increase, unsustainable tourism, shifting cultivation, absence of comprehensive conservation management in PAs and ECAs, and climate change induced disasters are some of the threats and challenges to biodiversity conservation in Bangladesh.

## BHUTAN

**Sonam Wangdi**, Head, Nature Conservation Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Government of Bhutan, presented Bhutan's achievements in biodiversity conservation and PA management. He emphasized that the PA system in Bhutan has been able to achieve the goals of effective management and financial sustainability in accordance with the NBSAP and Aichi target 11.

### Highlights

- Reflecting on the history of conservation, he mentioned that Forest Act 1969 was the first modern act enacted by the Royal Government of Bhutan. It stipulated that at least 60% of the total land area of Bhutan would be under forest cover for all times to come.
- Currently 70.46% of the country area is under forest cover and 51.44% of the total area is under the PA system.
- In 1993 Bhutan revised the protected area system, which was the main reason for the establishment of Bhutan Trust Fund for environmental conservation with USD 20 million. This was how funding for environmental conservation began in Bhutan.
- In recognition of its conservation work, Bhutan was awarded with UNEP Champions of Earth in 2005 and J Paul Getty Award for conservation leadership in 2006.
- Bhutan for Life was started in 2018 for sustainable financing of PA. In 2019, Bhutan embarked upon OECMs. In 2020, Bhutan refined PA boundaries using satellite images.

- Some of the key funds for biodiversity conservation in Bhutan include projects for GEF-5 and GEF-6 STAR allocations, Bhutan for Life, and IKI funding from the German government for areas outside of PAs with high conservation value.
- Bhutan has revised the zonation guideline for PAs and applied it to a few national parks. Additionally, the country has completed evaluating the PAs using a Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (Bhutan METT+) and also published Bhutan State of Park 2016, which provides an overview of the status and effectiveness of PAs in Bhutan.
- A few biological corridors will be operationalized soon and zonation guidelines will be implemented in a few national parks.
- Bhutan has proposed an Indo-Bhutan Peace Park and the negotiation for this has reached a fairly advanced stage. The park aims to foster cross-border cooperation and celebrate the long and cordial relationship between India and Bhutan.
- Ecotourism, green tax, revenue from hydropower and mining are some of the priority actions of the country for achieving Aichi Target 11 by 2020.

## INDIA

**Sujit Kumar Bajpayee**, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, began his presentation by highlighting India's National Biodiversity Target 6 under the National Biodiversity Action Plan which aligns with Aichi Target 11. He described the progress India has made towards achieving Target 11. He further highlighted the gaps and opportunities in achieving Aichi Target 11 through identifying and mapping OECMs, and reporting PAs to the WDPA. He concluded his presentation by underscoring priority national actions which are being undertaken by India for achieving Target 11 by the end of 2020.

### Highlights

- As per India's Sixth National Report, 27% of India's total geographical area has been effectively conserved through protected areas, with approximately 22% under terrestrial coverage and approximately 5% under coastal and marine coverage. This includes reserved forests, wetlands, Biodiversity Heritage Sites, and Eco-Sensitive Zones.
- Under AZEs, around 21 critically endangered species are being protected. Important IBAs are also being protected under different national laws.

- GEF-5 and GEF-6 projects implemented through UNDP India have helped to achieve several quantitative and qualitative elements of Target 11. Additionally, many other projects which support Aichi Target 11 are being implemented through GIZ and other organizations.
- India has sustained its position as a mega-diverse country. It is home to two-thirds of the world's wild tiger population, and has supported the recovery of 21 critically endangered wildlife species including the snow leopard, bustard (including floricans), Ganges river dolphin, hangul, Nilgiri tahr, marine turtles, etc.
- In order to contribute to the qualitative and quantitative elements of Target 11, India is in the process of identifying and mapping OECMs. The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) constituted an expert committee in June 2020 to develop criteria and guidelines for identifying OECMs. The committee identified 12 potential OECM categories including (1) private forests; (2) unclassed forests; (3) deemed forests; (4) common lands; (5) sacred groves; (6) wetlands/ lakes / reservoirs; (7) important bird and biodiversity areas; (8) biodiversity parks; (9) green belts; (10) urban trees and forests; (11) private sanctuaries; and (12) agricultural heritage systems.
- MoEFCC constituted a working group in October 2020 to develop and adopt guidelines and methodologies to help identify, recognize, support, monitor, map and report OECMs as part of achieving Aichi Target 11.
- MoEFCC has submitted shape files and other relevant information on protected areas to WCMC which was not previously added to the WDPA. WCMC is in the process of reviewing this information.

## MALDIVES

**Ilham Atho Mohamed**, Assistant Director, Environment Programme, Ministry of Environment and Energy, Maldives, shared the progress made and the challenges faced in achieving Aichi Target 11. Maldives prepared the NBSAP (2016–2025) with the goal of having at least 10% of coral reef area, 20% of wetlands and mangroves, and at least one sand bank and one uninhabited island from each atoll under some form of protection and management by 2025. In her presentation, Mohamed mentioned the challenges of estimating the current PA coverage based on terrestrial and marine areas and of reporting on different indicators provided by UNEP WCMC as Maldives is an entirely coral reef based country.

## Highlights

- Maldives has protected area coverage of 603 km<sup>2</sup>, which includes atoll boundaries.
- Maldives has identified Gallandho in northern Maldives as an IBA.
- The budget of GEF-5 allocation was used for Low-Carbon Energy Island project and GEF-6 allocation will be used in a biodiversity project that has just started being implemented.
- The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Maldives is a sanctuary for all marine megafauna where sharks, whales, dolphins, etc. are legally protected.
- Maldives hasn't allowed any activities including fishing between the 100–200 nautical mile zone of the EEZ. Therefore, the country has a safe ocean for marine species although there is no legal protection of the ocean except within atoll boundary areas.
- The country hasn't reported any OECMs to date; however, there is a possibility of designating OECMs in future.
- Maldives has been taking many steps to increase PA coverage. The country has carried out a programme on 'one island, one reef, and one mangrove' from each atoll for the protection and sustainable management of biodiversity. Twenty-four new sites have been included in Maldives' PA list. .
- For the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, the country has pledged to protect 20% of its oceans by 2030.
- A 'one resort–one island' concept has been applied, whereby each resort on an island is surrounded by a reef system and has a 500 m boundary. The resorts will have to abide by government rules and regulations restricting illegal activities and ensuring sustainable use of the area for tourism.
- For the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, Maldives is pledging to protect 20% of their EEZ, and working towards a 100% managed ocean with 30% of the ocean under PA.

## PAKISTAN

**Rizwan Irshad**, Deputy Director, Ministry of Climate Change, Government of Pakistan, presented the activities carried out by Pakistan to achieve Aichi Target 11.

### Highlights

- About 12% of the country area is under PA coverage including 398 PAs of different categories across the country.
- Pakistan recently launched the Protected Areas Initiative (PAI) under the “Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme” to improve the overall conservation of the existing PAs and increase community engagement and create a green stimulus through biodiversity conservation.
- Pakistan is planning to establish funds for selected PAs and expand the PA network from 13% to 15% by 2030.
- The provincial governments of Pakistan have pledged to provide finances for biodiversity protection activities.
- PAI has planned to prepare management plans and uplift the selected PAs as per established guidelines and protocols of IUCN, establish park services, and ensure the financial sustainability of selected PAs.
- PAI will be prioritizing ecotourism, green stimulus and national park services, management plans, operation and equipment, park conservation funds and community development.

## NEPAL

**Shiva Wagle**, Ministry of Forests and Environment, Government of Nepal, mentioned that protected areas make up 23.39% of Nepal’s total area. Nepal has cutting-edge security technology for wildlife conservation in PAs and for addressing human-wildlife conflict. There are various user groups in PAs who are engaged in a wide range of forest protection activities such as anti-poaching work, habitat improvement, grassland management for the maintenance of tigers’ prey base, agroforestry, sustainable forest management, ecotourism and nature-based tourism.

## Highlights

- The Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC), Nepal has drafted a National Zoo Policy and guidelines for smart green infrastructures, and declared six conservation landscapes for which transboundary cooperation is a key element.
- With the aim to promote smart green infrastructure, Nepal has constructed three underpass corridors in Barandabhar of Chitwan to allow the free movement of wild animals and prevent accidents.
- The country has identified 37 IBAs, which cover nearly 28% of the total country area.
- The budget allocated by GEF-5 was used for sustainable land management in the Churia Range. GEF-6 has been used for integrated landscape management to secure Nepal’s protected areas and critical corridors.
- Meaningful participation of local communities, a landscape conservation approach, and promotion of nature-based tourism, positive incentive measures and international cooperation are key elements of sustainable biodiversity conservation in Nepal.
- Species diversity has declined due to multiple factors such as climate change, overexploitation of natural resources, poaching, limited integration of indigenous knowledge, and limited political commitment at the local, provincial and national level.
- Nepal is planning to formulate its own post-2020 Biodiversity Strategy considering the 2050 Vision of Living in Harmony with Nature, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011–2020), the Decade of Action for Ecosystem Restoration, the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, and the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook.

## SRI LANKA

**Pathma Abeykoon**, Director, Biodiversity, Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka, said that the country’s second NBSAP for 2016–2022 is in line with Aichi target 11. She talked about Sri Lanka’s efforts to achieve sustainable development through the implementation of ecosystem-based approaches. She stated that most protected area managers are terrestrially focused and hence have limited knowledge, skills, and funding for adequately managing protected areas with freshwater and marine ecosystems.

## Highlights

- Sri Lanka has several policies and acts related to protected areas such as the Forest Conservation Act and the Flora and Fauna Protection Ordinance.
- In Sri Lanka, terrestrial PAs comprise 883 sites with an area of 2,339,347.128 hectares and marine PAs comprise 3 sites with an area of 87,225 hectares.
- Sri Lanka has identified 2 Natural Heritage Sites, 7 Ramsar Sites, and 111 IBAs. In addition, 275,734 hectares have been demarcated as key biodiversity areas for reptiles as part of OECMs.
- More research is needed to understand the degree to which protected areas cover inland water areas important for biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- Climate change and land use change are the main challenges to achieving Aichi target 11 in Sri Lanka.
- The government of Sri Lanka has made commitments to conserve biodiversity and is making efforts to turn those commitments into action.
- Identifying OECMs, preparing plans and policies, identifying environmentally sensitive areas, and achieving Aichi Target 11 will generate social, economic and environmental benefits for Sri Lanka.

## SECTION 3

# Closing session

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Pema Gyamtsho, Director General, ICIMOD, acknowledged and praised the progress made by each country towards Aichi Target 11 and biodiversity conversation. He highlighted the need for innovative ideas and sharing of best practices in protected areas management. He urged all the countries to update their protected area information in UNEP-WCMC WDPA and thanked everyone for their time and effort.

Nakul Chettri, CBD Focal Person, ICIMOD, ended the meeting with a vote of thanks. He thanked Minister Shakti Bahadur Basnet and Secretary Bishwa Nath Oli from the Ministry of Forests and Environment, Government of Nepal, for their special remarks during the dialogue. He extended special thanks to Board Member of ICIMOD from Afghanistan; Secretary from the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change of Bangladesh; Sarat Babu Gidda, Senior Programme Officer, CBD Secretariat; Pema Gyamtsho, Director General of ICIMOD; and Eklabya Sharma, Deputy Director General, ICIMOD, for their continuous support and guidance. He acknowledged all the delegates from different countries for their attendance and presentation on Aichi target11. Finally, he thanked Ruchi Pant and Henna Ahmad from UNDP India for their support, and the ICIMOD organizing committee for making the event successful.

Additional event information and materials are available at: <https://www.icimod.org/event/aichi-target-11-and-beyond-roadmap-for-south-asia-sub-region/>

# Acknowledgements

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The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) would like to acknowledge the Government of Nepal (GoN), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and Japan Biodiversity Fund for their support and cooperation in organizing the regional policy dialogue on “Aichi Target 11 and beyond: Roadmap for South Asia sub-region”. The dialogue helped to update the status and document the progress of the South Asia sub-region on Aichi Biodiversity Target 11.

ICIMOD is thankful to Shakti Bahadur Basnet, Minister of Forests and Environment, Nepal, for delivering special remarks as the chief guest at the dialogue event. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary, and Sarat Babu Gidda, Head of Biodiversity Science, Policy and Governance Unit, and Senior Programme Management Officer from the CBD Secretariat, for assigning ICIMOD to lead the South Asia Regional Implementation Support Network for Achieving Aichi Target 11 in the South Asia sub-region, and supporting the regional dialogue.

ICIMOD is thankful to Mohammad Rafi Qazizadah, ICIMOD board member from Afghanistan, and Ziaul Hasan, Secretary at the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change of Bangladesh, for their continuous support and guidance. We are equally thankful to Pema Gyamtsho, Director General, ICIMOD, Eklabya Sharma, Deputy Director General, ICIMOD, and Ruchi Pant, Head, Natural Resources and Biodiversity, UNDP India, for their valuable remarks during the opening session of the dialogue.

Further, ICIMOD extends its gratitude to all the CBD National Focal Points of eight countries of the South Asia sub-region including Mohammad Rafi Qazizadah, Afghanistan; Ziaul Hasan, Bangladesh; Sonam Lhaden Khandu, Bhutan; Sujit Kumar Bajpayee, India; Ilham Atho Mohamed, Maldives; Rizwan Irshad, Pakistan; Shiva Wagle, Nepal; and R.H.M. Pathma Abeykoon, Sri Lanka. ICIMOD would also like to thank the representatives of conservation organizations who participated in the meeting and contributed to the dialogue.

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