

## Environment related International/National Organisations

### International Organisations

#### United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

- It is an **international environmental** authority that works to **establish a global environmental agenda** and promote the **efficient implementation** of the environmental dimension of the **United Nations Sustainable Development Programme**.
- **Established:** It was established by **Maurice Strong**, its first director, after the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in **June 1972**.
- **Headquarters:** Nairobi, Kenya
- It acts as a **catalyst, advocate, educator and facilitator** to promote the **wise use and sustainable development of the global environment**.
- **Mandate:** To provide **leadership, deliver science and develop solutions** on a wide range of issues, including climate change, the management of marine and terrestrial ecosystems, and green economic development.
- As a member of the United Nations Development Group, UNEP **aims to help the world meet the 17 Sustainable Development Goals**.
- UNEP hosts the **secretariats of several major multilateral environmental agreements and conventions**, including:
  - Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
  - Minamata Convention on Mercury
  - Basel Convention (on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal)
  - Rotterdam Convention (on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade)
  - Stockholm Convention (on Persistent Organic Pollutants)
  - Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)
  - Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
  - Vienna Convention (for the Protection of the Ozone Layer)
  - Montreal Protocol (on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer)
  - Bamako Convention (on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa)
  - Carpathian Convention

- Tehran Convention (on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea)
- Climate & Clean Air Coalition (CCAC)
- It releases **many reports** in the field of sustainable development. Some are-
  - Emissions Gap Report
  - Global Resources Outlook
  - Food Waste Index Report
  - Global Environment Outlook
  - Plastics Treaty Negotiation Reports
  - Adaptation Gap Report
  - Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO)
  - Global Air Quality Assessment

### United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

- It is the UN's **global development network**, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life.
- It helps countries develop policies, leadership skills, partnerships and institutional capabilities to **achieve the Sustainable Development Goals**.
- **Established:** It was **established in 1965** by the General Assembly of the United Nations.
  - UNDP is based on the **merging** of the United Nations Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, created in 1949, and the United Nations Special Fund, established in 1958.
- **Headquarters:** New York City, United States, situated within the United Nations headquarters complex
- **Mission and vision:** Its mandate is to end poverty, build democratic governance, rule of law, and inclusive institutions.
- **Work areas:** Their work is concentrated on **three main focus areas**:
  - Sustainable development
  - Democratic governance and Peacebuilding
  - Climate and disaster resilience
- UNDP helps countries **attract and use aid effectively**.
- **Governance:** It is considered an **executive board within the UN General Assembly (UNGA)**.
  - The **UNDP Executive Board** is made up of representatives from **36 countries** worldwide, who serve on a **rotating basis**.
- **Funding:** UNDP is primarily **funded by voluntary contributions** from member states, as well as resources from other sources.

- UNDP is **central** to the **United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG)**, a network that operates in almost **170 countries** and **unites the 40 UN funds**, programmes, specialised agencies and other bodies working to advance the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.
- **Reports published:** The annual **Human Development Report** is UNDP's flagship independent publication.

### **Global Environment Facility (GEF)**

- It is a **family of funds** dedicated to confronting biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, and strains on land and ocean health.
- **Established:** It was established on the **eve of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit** of UNFCCC to help tackle our planet's most pressing environmental problems.
- **Secretariat:** Its secretariat is based in **Washington, D.C.**
- **Financial Assistance:** It provides financial assistance for **five major international environmental conventions**:
  - Minamata Convention on Mercury.
  - Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).
  - United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD)
  - United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).
  - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- **Members:** It has 184 member countries, including India.
- **Governance:** It has a unique governing structure organized around an **Assembly, the Council, the Secretariat, 18 agencies**, a Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, and the Evaluation Office.
- **GEF Trust Fund:** The **Fund** was established to **help tackle our planet's most pressing environmental problems**.
- Funds are available to **developing countries and countries with economies in transition** to meet the objectives of the international environmental conventions and agreements.

### **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)**

- It is the UN body in charge of **examining climate change science**.
- **Established:** It was established by the **World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1988**.
- **Membership:** The IPCC is an organisation of governments that are members of the **United Nations or the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)**.
  - The IPCC currently has **195 members**.
- **Objective:** To assess scientific, technical, and socio-economic information relevant to the understanding of human-induced climate change, potential impacts of climate change, and options for mitigation and adaptation.

- The IPCC **provides governments with scientific information** for use in developing climate **policies**.
- **IPCC Reports:**
  - The main activity of the IPCC is the **preparation of reports assessing** the state of knowledge of climate change. These include **assessment reports, special reports and methodology reports**.
  - IPCC reports are also **key inputs into international climate change negotiations** under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (**UNFCCC**).
- The IPCC **does not undertake new research or monitor climate-related data**.
  - Instead, it **conducts assessments** of the state of climate change knowledge on the basis of published and peer-reviewed scientific and technical literature.
- Scientists **volunteer** their time to assess the thousands of scientific papers published each year to provide a comprehensive summary of what is known about the drivers of climate change, impacts and future risks, and how adaptation and mitigation can reduce those risks.
- **Assessments:** The IPCC's **first assessment report was released in 1990**.
  - The IPCC finished its **Sixth Assessment Report cycle in 2023** and has now **entered its Seventh Assessment Report cycle**.

### **IPCC working groups**

- It comprises **three working groups**, which focus on **different aspects** of climate science and climate change response.
  - **Working Group I:** looks at the physics of climate change;
  - **Working Group II:** examines climate change impacts and adaptation;
  - **Working Group III:** focuses on climate change mitigation;
- The three working groups release **separate reports**, which are then compiled into a synthesis report.
- **Recognition:** In **2007** the IPCC shared, with Al Gore, the **Nobel Peace Prize** for disseminating knowledge about human-caused climate change.

### **International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO)**

- It is an **intergovernmental organization** promoting the **sustainable management and conservation of tropical forests** and the expansion and diversification of **international trade in tropical timber** from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests.
- **Establishment:** It was established under the **International Tropical Timber Agreement 1983 (ITTA 1983)**, negotiated under the auspices of the **UN Conference on Trade and Development**.

- **Headquarters:** Yokohama, Japan
- **Financial assistance:** It facilitates **funding for forestry projects in tropical timber producing countries.**
- **Funding of ITTO:** All projects are **funded by voluntary contributions** from governments.
- **Members:** 75 countries (including **India**)
- **Governance:** International Tropical Timber Council (**ITTC**) is the **governing body** of the ITTO.
- Its members manage about **80 per cent of the world's tropical forests** and are responsible for **90 per cent of the global tropical timber trade.**

### **United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)**

- It promotes the management, conservation, and sustainable development of all types of forests.
- **Established:** It was established in 2000 by the UN Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC).
- The Forum meets **annually** at the UN Headquarters in New York, bringing together representatives of all member states and forest-related agencies for high-level dialogue on technical matters in odd years and policy matters in even years.
- The forum has universal membership, and is composed of all Member States of the United Nations and specialized agencies.
- India is a **founding member of UNFF.**
- The declaration of the 19th session **aims** to achieve agreement on a high-level political commitment to forest protection, with specific actions for effective implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) by UNFF and its stakeholders.

### **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**

- It is a global environmental organization dedicated to the conservation of nature and the sustainable use of natural resources.
- It functions as a unique membership-based union comprising both **government bodies and civil society organizations (CSOs).**
- IUCN provides knowledge, data, tools, and policy support to **governments, NGOs, private entities,** and other stakeholders to integrate nature conservation with economic development and human well-being.

- Established in **1948**, the IUCN has evolved into the **world's largest and most diverse environmental network**, with over **1,300 member organizations** globally.
- The IUCN is best known for its **Red List of Threatened Species**, initiated in **1964**, which is the most comprehensive global inventory of the conservation status of plant and animal species.
  - Within the Red List framework, the term “**threatened**” refers to species categorized as **Critically Endangered (CR)**, **Endangered (EN)**, and **Vulnerable (VU)**.

### **Tropical Forest Alliance (TFA)**

- The **Tropical Forest Alliance 2020 (TFA 2020)** was established in **2012 during the Rio+20 Conference**.
- It operates as a **Public-Private Partnership (PPP)**, wherein participating entities voluntarily collaborate—individually and collectively—to reduce tropical deforestation linked to the production of key commodities such as **soy, palm oil, beef, and paper and pulp**.
- The Alliance addresses the underlying **drivers of tropical deforestation** through a combination of **policy interventions, market-based strategies, and communication initiatives**.
- TFA is an initiative under the **World Economic Forum's platform on Shaping the Future of Global Public Goods**.
- Its **secretariat is hosted by the World Economic Forum**.
- The Alliance aims to **cut deforestation by half by 2020 and to completely stop it by 2030**.

### **International Whaling Commission (IWC)**

- It is an **intergovernmental environmental organization** established to **conserve whale populations and regulate whaling activities**. Its legal foundation is the **International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling**, signed in **1946**, making it one of the **earliest international environmental agreements**.
- The IWC currently has **88 member countries**, all of which are signatories to the Convention..
- The Convention includes a **legally binding Schedule**, which forms an integral part of the agreement. This Schedule covers various regulatory provisions, including **catch limits**, which can be **amended by the Commission**, typically during its **biennial meetings**.
- The IWC has also introduced a **Strategic Plan for Whale Watching**, aimed at promoting this activity responsibly and in line with **international best practices**.

- In addition to regulation, the Commission conducts **scientific research** on **cetaceans** (including whales, dolphins, and porpoises), maintains **scientific databases**, and publishes the **Journal of Cetacean Research and Management**, a peer-reviewed scientific journal.
- **India is a member state of the IWC.**

### **World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)**

- It is the **world's leading non-profit conservation organization**, operating in **over 100 countries**.
- It was **founded in 1961** and has its **headquarters in Gland, Switzerland**.
- WWF's core mission is to **conserve nature** and address the **most critical threats to biodiversity** on Earth.
- It works globally at all levels—**with communities, governments, and organizations**—to create and implement **innovative solutions** that protect ecosystems, wildlife, and human settlements.
- WWF focuses its efforts on key areas such as **climate, forests, food, freshwater, oceans, and wildlife**.
- It undertakes various projects in collaboration with international partners, local communities, and national governments.
- Notable campaigns by WWF include **Earth Hour** and the **Debt-for-Nature Swap**.
- The organization also publishes the **Living Planet Report** every two years since **1998**, which assesses the **state of the planet's health** and the **impact of human activity on nature**.

### **Wetland International (WI)**

- It is a **global, independent, not-for-profit organization** dedicated to the **conservation and restoration of wetlands** and their resources for the benefit of **people and biodiversity**.
- It operates with the support of **government and NGO members** from across the globe.
- The organization has a strong presence in the **developing world** and maintains around **20 offices**, including **regional, national, and project offices** spread across all continents.
- Its **headquarters is located in Ede, the Netherlands**.

### **BirdLife International**

- **BirdLife International** is a **global partnership of conservation organizations** that works to conserve **birds, their habitats**, and overall **biodiversity**, while promoting the **sustainable use of natural resources** in collaboration with local communities.
- It is considered the **world's largest partnership for bird conservation**, uniting **national organizations** in over **100 countries**.
- The organization was **formerly known as the International Committee for Bird Preservation**.
- **Headquarters:** United Kingdom  
**Regional Offices:** Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Central Asia, the Middle East, and the Pacific.
- It serves as the **official Red List Authority for birds** for the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**, playing a key role in assessing the conservation status of bird species globally.
- One of its major contributions is the identification and publication of the **Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs)**, which are crucial for bird conservation.
- It publishes a **quarterly magazine called *World Birdwatch***, featuring authoritative articles and updates on global bird conservation efforts.

## National Organisations

### National Board for Wildlife (NBWL)

- It is a statutory body constituted by the Central Government under Section 5 A of the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 (WLPA)**.
- It is worth noting that the **Wildlife Act of 1972** did not originally include the **NBWL**. The NBWL was established later through an amendment in **2002**.
- It replaced the **Indian Board for Wildlife**, which was formed in **1952**.
- The NBWL is tasked with advising the government on wildlife conservation matters and granting approvals for projects within **protected areas (PAs)**.
- According to the **Wildlife Protection Act (WLPA)**, activities such as constructing tourist lodges, altering PA boundaries, diverting or destroying wildlife habitats, and de-notifying **Tiger Reserves** cannot proceed without the **NBWL's** approval or recommendations.

### Structure of NBWL



- **Chairperson:** The **Prime Minister**.
- **Vice-Chairperson:** The Minister in charge of the **Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change**.
- **Member-Secretary:** The **Additional Director General of Forests (Wildlife) & Director, Wildlife Preservation**.
- **Members:**
  - 3 Members of Parliament (2 from Lok Sabha and 1 from Rajya Sabha).
  - **5 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)**.
  - 10 eminent **conservationists, ecologists, and environmentalists** nominated by the central government.
  - Secretaries of various government departments.
  - The **Chief of Army Staff**.

### **Standing Committee of NBWL**

- The **Standing Committee** is an independent body under the **NBWL**.
- It is chaired by the **Minister of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change**.
- It consists of not more than **ten members** nominated by the Minister from amongst the members of the **NBWL**.
  - While the **NBWL** serves as a policy-making body that advises and contributes to the Central Government's wildlife protection policies, the **Standing Committee** primarily focuses on project clearances.

### **Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI)**

- It was established in 1962 under the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960**.
- It was started under the stewardship of **Rukmini Devi Arundale**, a well-known humanitarian.
- It functions as a **statutory advisory body under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying** to ensure animal welfare and prevent cruelty.
- The **Chairperson is appointed by the Central Government**, along with official members from various ministries and non-official members, including animal welfare activists and veterinarians.

### **Membership:**

- The Board **comprises 28 members, each serving a term of three years**.
- It includes representatives from various government organizations, animal rights activists, and parliamentarians.

It is headquartered in Ballabgarh, Haryana.

## Powers of AWBI

- **Advisory Powers:** Recommends improvements in animal welfare laws to the government.
- **Regulatory Powers:** Ensures enforcement of animal protection laws and issues guidelines.
- **Financial Powers:** Grants funds for shelters, medical care, and rescue operations.
- **Monitoring Powers:** Oversees performing animals, slaughterhouses, and transport conditions.

## Functions of AWBI

- **Legal & Policy Advisory:** Suggests amendments to animal welfare laws.
- **Financial Assistance:** Funds animal shelters, ambulances, and birth control programs.
- **Public Awareness:** Conducts campaigns and training programs.
- **Monitoring:** Regulates circuses, films, and animal use in entertainment.
- **Enforcement of Rules:** Implements laws like Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023, and Transport of Animals Rules.

## Central Zoo Authority (CZA)

- It is a statutory, autonomous body established by the Government of India under the **Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change**.
- It was formed in **1992** under the provisions of the **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**.
- The CZA's primary responsibility is to enforce **minimum standards and norms** for the **healthcare** and **well-being** of animals housed in zoos across India. In addition to this, the CZA also oversees zoo management, ensuring that these institutions maintain the welfare of animals, and it provides **technical** and **financial support** when needed.
- Every zoo in India must be recognized by the CZA to operate. The Authority evaluates zoos based on various prescribed parameters and grants recognition based on compliance with these guidelines.
- The main functions of the CZA include:
  - Ensuring the proper management of zoos.
  - Setting standards for animal care and the upkeep of zoo facilities.
  - Offering support to improve zoo infrastructure and animal welfare programs.
  - Monitoring and ensuring that zoos comply with national and international standards for animal care.

## **Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB)**

- The **Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB)** is a statutory, multi-disciplinary body established by the **Government of India** to combat organized wildlife crime across the country.
- It was constituted through an amendment to the **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972**.
- **Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**
- **Headquarters: New Delhi**

### **Mandate of Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB):**

Under the **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972**, the WCCB is mandated to:

- **Gather Intelligence** on organized wildlife crime and share it with enforcement agencies for prompt action.
- **Maintain a Centralized Database** to track and monitor wildlife crimes nationwide.
- **Coordinate Internationally** with foreign authorities and global organizations to tackle cross-border wildlife crime.
- **Build Capacity** of enforcement agencies for scientific investigation and assist states in wildlife crime prosecutions.
- **Advise the Government** on wildlife crime issues of national and international importance, including legal and policy matters.
- **Support Customs Authorities** in inspecting flora and fauna consignments as per the Wildlife Protection Act, **CITES**, and **EXIM Policy**.
- **Operate an Online Database System** for real-time data and trend analysis, aiding preventive action and operations like **SAVE KURMA, THUNDERBIRD, WILDNET, LESKNOW**, and others.

## **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)**

- It was registered as a society on **12th August 2011** under the **Societies Registration Act, 1860**.
- It serves as the implementation arm of the **National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA)**, which was constituted under the provisions of the **Environment (Protection) Act (EPA), 1986**.
  - NGRBA was dissolved in 2016 and replaced by the National Council for Rejuvenation, Protection, and Management of River Ganga.
- The objective of the National Mission for Clean Ganga is to reduce pollution in the Ganga River and ensure its rejuvenation.

- The operational area of this project covers the Ganges Basin and all the states through which the Ganga River flows, including Delhi.

### **National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)**

- The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) is a **statutory authority** set up under India's **Biological Diversity Act (2002)**.
- It came into existence in **2003**, with its **headquarters** in **Chennai**.
- **Function:** The NBA provides **facilitative, regulatory, and advisory functions** to the Government of India on issues of conservation, sustainable use, and fair & equitable sharing of benefits arising from the country's biological resources.
- **Decentralised Approach:** Under the Biodiversity Act, 2002 and Biodiversity Rules, 2004, the following two other entities have been established to complement the National Biodiversity Authority:
  - State Biodiversity Boards (SBB) at the State level, and
  - Biodiversity Management Committees (BMC) at the local village level.

### **National Green Tribunal**

- The National Green Tribunal was established in **2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010** for **effective and expeditious disposal** of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources.
- It is a **specialized body** equipped with the necessary expertise to **handle environmental disputes** involving multi-disciplinary issues.
  - It is powered to safeguard the **basic right to have a safe environment for individuals as part of Article 21** of the Constitution. (**Subhash Kumar vs State of Bihar**).
- **Governed by:** The Tribunal shall **not be bound by the procedure laid down under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908**, but shall be **guided by principles of natural justice**.
- **Fast disposal of cases:** The Tribunal is mandated to make and endeavour for disposal of applications or appeals finally **within 6 months of filing of the case**.
- **Locations:** **New Delhi** is the Principal Place of Sitting of the Tribunal and **Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata and Chennai** shall be the other **four place** of sitting of the Tribunal.
- **Composition of NGT:** The Tribunal comprises:
  - Chairperson: A retired Supreme Court judge.
  - Judicial members: Retired High Court judges.
  - Expert members: Professionals with at least 15 years of experience in fields related to environment or forest conservation.

- **Simple approach** – Aggrieved parties may approach the Tribunal in person by submitting an application and **no need of advocate**.
- **Orders are binding** – Its orders are **enforceable** and have powers of a civil court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.
- **Orders are not final** – It has powers to **review its own decisions** and if this fails, the decision can be challenged before the Supreme Court within 90 days.

### **Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA)**

- The Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) is a **statutory body** under the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change, Government of India.
- It was **established to manage and utilize funds** collected as compensation from user agencies that **divert forest land** for non-forest purposes, ensuring ecological restoration and sustainable forest management.
- **Origin:** CAMPA was first constituted in **2004** following a **Supreme Court directive** to manage funds collected for compensatory afforestation, net present value (NPV) of forest land, and other related charges from user agencies.
- **Statutory Status:** The **Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016**, formalized CAMPA's structure and operations, creating the **National Compensatory Afforestation Fund (NCAF)** and **State Compensatory Afforestation Funds (SCAFs)** under the **Public Account of India** and the respective states.
- **Fund Flow:** **90%** of the collected funds are allocated to **State Funds**, and 10% to the National Fund.
- **Objectives and Functions**
  - **Primary Aim:** To mitigate the adverse impact of forest land diversion by promoting afforestation and regeneration activities, thereby compensating for lost forest cover.
- **Fund Utilization:** Funds are used for:
  - Compensatory afforestation on non-forest or degraded forest land
  - Conservation and management of existing forests and wildlife
  - Infrastructure development for forest protection and management
  - Assisted natural regeneration and biodiversity enhancement
- **Institutional Mechanism:** CAMPA ensures that funds are released and utilized quickly, efficiently, and transparently through a well-defined mechanism.
- **Structure:**
  - **National CAMPA:** Functions as an advisory and monitoring body, laying down guidelines, providing technical support, and reviewing state-level plans and activities.
  - **State CAMPA:** Each state has its own authority to implement and monitor afforestation and conservation activities using the funds received.

