



## **Sectoral Integration of Biodiversity in Iran**

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## **1. Introduction**

Iran reported<sup>1</sup> on national biodiversity legislation and framework, integrating biodiversity into relevant sectors, biodiversity related conventions and agreements.

## **2. National Biodiversity Legislation and Framework**

Regulations and rules pertaining to the protection and utilization of natural resources including water, forests, rangelands and wildlife were in effect long before regulations concerning protection of the environment. Before 1925, there were some traditional regulations in place for utilization of natural resources. In the first laws and regulations, conservation of natural resources especially forests, rangelands and water were the main attention along the development plans. Traditional forest management has been registered since in 1921 for north forests of Iran. In addition, until 1948 in most of the regions of Iran developed. In 1962, forests were nationalized, before this time ownership were governmentally and privately and it was not any law and policy to exploit. This was a turning point in natural resource management in Iran. However later on, after the Islamic Revolution, A number of articles were adopted in the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran to ensure that the protection of the environment is observed in every aspect of Iranian life. Article 50 of the Constitution (Article 50 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran: It shall be considered a public duty in the Islamic Republic to protect the natural environment in which the present as well as future generations shall have a developing social life. Therefore, economic activities or otherwise which cause pollution or an irreparable damage to the environment shall be prohibited) is the most important accredited existing legal statement concerning protection of the environment and preventing its pollution and degradation. It states that all legal and real persons have a duty to protect the environment. The Constitution prohibits all activities, economic or otherwise, that may result in irreparable damage to the environment. Over the past 15 years, the Government has increasingly striven to operationalise these objectives, by paying increasing attention to environmental issues and to biodiversity conservation. The Fourth National Development Plan (2005-2009), the NDP, devotes an entire Chapter to Environmental Protection. The first Article in this Chapter states the importance of biodiversity conservation and emphasises the government's commitment to implementing the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). However, this implementation has faced many challenges during the last decade. Environmental conservation is usually considered as a barrier to big national development projects and therefore DoE has faced several difficulties in mainstreaming the National Biodiversity Action Plan.

Article 45 of the Constitution is also related to environmental protection and natural resource preservation.

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<sup>1</sup> Iran (2010) Fourth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Department of Environment, October 2010, 145 pp.

Since the establishment of the Department of the Environment in 1974, several regulations and laws have enacted, directly, in sectors to ensure biodiversity conservation such as:

- The Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act (EPEA), 1967
- The Executive Rules of the EPEA, 1975
- Coastal Properties Act, 1975
- Fair Water Distribution Law, 1983
- The Clean Water Act, 1984
- Law for the Protection of Natural Resources and Forest Reserves, 1992
- The Amendment to the Clean Water Act, 1994
- Regulations on EIA and Amendments, 1994, 1997, 1999
- Law for the Protection and Utilization of Aquatic Resources, 1995
- The National Strategy for the Environment and Sustainable Development (NSES), 1996
- National Environmental Plan of Action (NEPA), 1997
- Guidelines for Installation of Septic Tanks and Sewage Treatment Units 1998
- Establishment of "Participation Bureau" in DoE to assist environmental NGOs, 1998
- Guidelines for Industrial Location, 2000
- Standards for Air Emissions and Waste Water Discharge, 2000
- The Law of the Third National Development Plan, 2000
- The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), 2001
- National Seed Law , 2003
- The Law of the Forth National Development Plan, 2005
- National Law on Registration of Patents and Trademarks, 2008
- National Law on Biosafety, 2009
- National Law on Animal Husbandry, 2009

There are notable Customary Laws concerning utilization of rangelands especially those observed by the nomadic animal husbandry and in the grazing of livestock.

In 1999, in line with the Constitution, the Supreme Council of the Environment (The Supreme Council of Environment is a legislative body that enacts relevant regulations and the classification of protected areas. The Chairman is the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Other members are Ministers of Agricultural Jihad, Foreign Affairs, Industry and Mines, Interior, Health and Medical Education, Science Technology and Research, the Heads of the Department of Environment, Administration and Planning Organization and the Institute of Standard and Industrial Research. The Head of the DOE is also a member and the Secretary of the SCE.) approved new regulations for implementation of EIA for major development projects. According to this regime, all major development projects- Petrochemical plants, oil refineries, power plants, steel mills, dams and other water civil structures, industrial towns, solid waste recycling plants, large abattoirs, urban waste landfills and airports- are obliged to implement EIA procedures simultaneous with planning and preparation of feasibility studies. According to this regulation, the responsibilities of the DoE are well defined. The Department is obliged to present the necessary EIA outline and methodology to applicants as well as monitoring the implementation of these policies. Projects should proceed in parallel with DoE inspection. Start of any construction activities for such tasks are possible only after approval of the EIA report by the DoE.

The article 58 of the 4th National Development Plan (NDP) urges the government to implement the national action plan for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity resources at the national level and it also requires appropriate coordinations among relevant organizations.

#### The Operational Framework

Modern and formal environmental management program in Iran was established at 1956. The program was upgraded and restructured as the Department of the Environment in 1974. Its agenda was improved, accordingly, to insure the enhancement and promotion of policies designed to establish equilibrium between the needs of social development and environmental protection.

With the ratification of the new Constitution in 1979, new legislative ground was forged and environmental enhancement became an important part of the country's legal framework. The Department of Environment was given more visibility under the auspices of the Vice-President of the Republic to be the front body for preparation, and implementation of environmental laws and regulations, and, also, monitoring the status of environmental and biological resources in the country.

To, effectively, respond to the technical and legal needs of environment at the national and international levels, several divisions were established in the Department of Environment (DoE):

- Division of Natural Environment and Biodiversity, which covers all issues in the field of biodiversity, biosafety, endangered species, natural habitats, protected areas, wetlands, and ex-situ conservation.
- Division of Human Environment, which deals with all issues related to the environmental pollutions, climate change, EIA, etc.

- Division of Marine Environment; addresses environmental issues in transboundary water basins including rivers, Caspian Sea, Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman.
- Division of Education and Planning; it is charged with coordination and planning of the policies needed for development of training, information and pooling of public collaboration.
- Division of Administrative and Parliament Affairs is responsible for provisions of administrative, accounting, budgeting, organizational support and coordination necessary for effective operation of the organization.

The DoE stretches its intervention and monitoring throughout the country through its Provincial Offices. The offices are in close contact and coordination with other local and provincial authorities, to pursue objectives, plans and programs of the Department at the provincial level.

However, due to the fragmentation of tasks and functions among several ministries and organizations, involvement of other government institutions in this multi-disciplinary task is indispensable. Accordingly, regarding preparation and enforcement of climate change or biodiversity laws and regulations, the DoE share the responsibilities and/or seek the proper intervention/support of other government institutions, such as the Ministry of Jihad-e- Agriculture (MAJ), Ministry of Petroleum and the Ministry of Energy.

### **3. Integrating Biodiversity into Relevant Sectors**

In the context of operational framework and cooperation of different sectors for conservation of biodiversity; also taking into account various technical considerations and the legal nature of environmental issues, the National Committee for Sustainable Development (NCSD) was established in May 1994, upon the approval of the Supreme Council of the Environment, to ensure national coordination amongst all stakeholders. Its creation was also an outcome of the 1992 Rio Summit. The secretariat of NCSD is hosted within the Department of the Environment, and the Committee is presided over by the Vice-President of the Republic and head of the DoE. There are 18 members in the National Committee including the Chairperson, Vice-Chair and representatives from the Ministries of Energy, Industries and Mining, Foreign Affairs, Jihad-e-Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Science, Research and Technology, Oil, Interior, Information Technology and Communications, and Health and Medical Education; and those from the Directorate for Planning and Strategic Supervision in the Office of the President (previously Management and Planning Organization), Meteorology Organization, Department of the Environment, NGOs Network and Academy of Science. Some representatives of other governmental or non-governmental organizations are invited to attend the meetings accordingly and have the right to vote.

Several sub-committees have been established under the guidance of NCSD. Each of these sub-committees are incharge of a different international environmental convention and are chaired and organized by another ministry or organization than the Department of the Environment. These subcommittees, in addition to the technical, legal and political aspects of the conventions, should also address preparation of national reports to the conventions, and propose, approve and monitor

implementation of the relevant national and regional environmental projects. In addition, national steering committees are in place to coordinate, monitor and evaluate implementation of such projects. These steering committees should keep NCSD informed on a periodical basis.

Although the importance of biodiversity conservation has been established in environment and development policy of Iran for some time, it is only in recent years that sectoral policy and programmes have started to mention the importance of nature and/or biodiversity conservation. Now, in almost all relevant ministries such as agriculture, energy, oil, etc., there is an environment office to monitor environmental matters. For example:

- In the forest sector, the Ministry of Jihad-e-Agriculture is implementing several programmes to protect forest covers in Iran, of which a principal objective is to conserve biodiversity. Simultaneous with development of NBSAP the government council approved a regulation for conservation of the Caspian forests in north of Iran with the aim of reducing commercial utilization of forests. Several other policy and programmes stated the need to conserve biological resources in forests and rangelands in order to implement article 69 of the 4th NDP.
- The MAJ has initiated a plan for establishing a decision support system for desertification control through floodwater spreading in Iran - In the water sector, the mandate of the Water Affairs Department of the Ministry of Energy emphasises on the importance of protecting the hydrological cycle and conserving catchments areas. Likewise, the Watershed Management Unit in MAJ has issued policy statements stressing the importance of conserving biodiversity in relation to the protection of water resources. Recently, there has been a revision in administrative and management structures for improvement of water resources management;
- In the tourism sector, the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organisation (CHHTO), is obliged to take steps to co-ordinate the sustainable exploitation of the country's natural heritages, and to work closely with the Department of Environment. Article 114 of the 4th NDP, also, requests the government to recognize, protect and to conduct research in order to promote cultural heritage, in particular, sustainable ecotourism.
- In the training and research sector, and in response to chapter 7 of the 4th NDP, the Environment and Sustainable Development Research Centre (ESDRC), has been established affiliated to the DoE, acting as technical and scientific back stopping centre to the conservation activities at the national level.

Iran has also developed close cooperation with relevant international organizations (FAO, CGIAR, etc.). According to such cooperation and based on new approaches, several activities and programmes have been developed by MAJ in which, specific assessments of components of agricultural biodiversity are undertaken.

It has to be notified that the relevant administration bodies in the country (e.g. MAJ) are mandated to develop some policies and plans, based on what is previewed in the 4th NDP.

The Ministry of Industries and Mines (MIM) is working with other relevant agencies at the national level for dissemination of environmental knowledge and capacity building in the private sector for conducting restoration and rehabilitation of mining projects.

Article 67 of the 4th NDP urges to develop and implement an integrated management plan for conservation of fragile ecosystems especially Lake Urmia. The DoE in cooperation with the other relevant ministries should plan and develop this program. Recently there has been an agreement between DoE and other related organizations including MAJ to cooperate in conservation and restoration of Lake Urmia.

#### **4. Biodiversity Related Conventions and Agreements**

Iran is a committed and active member of several international agreements, which in part reflect its moral, ethical and scientific obligations towards the protection of its national biological resources and the global biodiversity. Due to this commitment and immense biodiversity it has unsurpassed opportunities for long-term conservation plans.

Currently Iran has bilateral environmental cooperation with the governments or research institutions of many countries.

Among the ratified biodiversity related multilateral agreements, which Iran is a party are:

##### **1- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands**

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, signed in Ramsar, Iran in 1971, is an intergovernmental treaty, which provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

The Convention on Wetlands came into force for the Islamic Republic of Iran on 21 December 1975. Iran presently has 22 sites designated as Wetlands of International Importance, with a surface area of about 1,500,000 hectares. The two most important recent activity conducted under this convention in Iran include removal of Alagol, Almagol and Ajigol sites from the Montreux Record and extension of Kiashahr Ramsar site to total area of Boujagh National Park.

Regional Centre for Training and Research on Wetlands in West and Central Asia has been established in Ramsar city, in Iran. This centre works under the supervision and guidance of the Ramsar convention and it was approved to be established at the 8th Conference of Parties to Ramsar Convention held in Valencia. The overall goal of the centre is to enhance the implementation of the Ramsar Convention in the region through training, research, advocacy and public awareness programmes. To date the centre has conducted many regional workshops and meetings. More information on the centre is available at: <http://www.rrc-cwa.org/en/index.php>

##### **2- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

Iran signed the convention in 1992 and became a party to CBD in 1996. With the current report so far, Iran has submitted four national reports on the implementation of the Convention. Iran has been actively participating in CBD meetings and events.

In 2000, Iran also signed the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, leading to its ratification in 2004.

### 3- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

The objective of the UNCCD is to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in countries experiencing serious drought and/ or desertification. The UNCCD is working to develop long-term integrated strategies that focus simultaneously on improved productivity of land, and the rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable management of land and water resources, leading to improved living conditions, in particular at the community level.

Iran is one of the first countries that signed the Convention to combat desertification and completed the ratification processes in 1996. In line with its commitments, Iran submitted its First National Report on the Implementation of the Convention in February 2000. The Second and the Third National Reports were also submitted to the UNCCD secretariat in May 2002 and May 2006, respectively. National strategies and actions have been defined for this convention and there is a permanent secretariat in Iran. Also, national committee on desertification has been formed including authorities from related organizations.

### 4- The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)

The CMS aims to conserve terrestrial, marine and avian migratory species throughout their range. It is an intergovernmental treaty, concluded under the aegis of UNEP, concerned with the conservation of wildlife and habitats on a global scale. The CMS was also called the Bonn Convention, sometime ago.

Iran acceded as 106th Party to the Convention in February 2008. Migratory species represent an important component of Iran's biodiversity. Altogether, 24 Appendix I and 136 Appendix II CMS listed migratory species live in Iran, among them species like the Blue Whale, Humpback Whale, Indo-Pacific Hump-backed Dolphin, Whale Shark, Dugong as well as 5 turtle species and such majestic animals as the Imperial Eagle and the White-tailed Eagle.

Iran has joined, a Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane (MoU) in 1993 and other MoUs for Slender-billed Curlew and Marine Turtles, both, under the auspices of CMS to help further protect and conserve these important endangered species.

### 5- The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

CITES is an international agreement between governments, which came into force in 1975. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.

The convention was ratified by Iran in August 1976 and according to the provisions of the Convention, 3 months later, in November 1976, it entered into force for the country. The official custom of Iran follows

this Convention very strictly and all the imported and exported species are controlled according to the CITES appendices.

The recent activities conducted under CITES in Iran include:

- 1) Participation in the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Doha (Qatar), 13-25 March 2010,
- 2) Inclusion of salamandrid species *Neurergus kiaseri* in Appendix I of the convention
- 3) Membership in advisory Committee of the convention secretariat to review Appendix II,
- 4) Coordination with customs duties throughout the country to control the import and export of plants and animals.

#### 6- The World Heritage Convention (WHC)

The World Heritage Convention (WHC) is an international agreement that was adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1972. It is based on the premise that certain places on Earth are of outstanding universal value and should therefore form part of the common heritage of mankind. The Convention seeks to identify and safeguard our world's most outstanding natural and cultural heritage.

Iran became a Party to the Convention in February 1975. Currently there are 10 cultural World Heritage Sites in Iran including Persepolis (1979), Tchogha Zanbil (1979), Meidan Emam, Esfahan (1979), Takht-e Soleyman (2003), Pasargadae (2004), Bam and its Cultural Landscape (2004), Soltaniyeh (2005), Bisotun (2006), Armenian Monastic Ensembles of Iran (2008), Shushtar, Historical Hydraulic System (2009).

Iran is also a party to the following regional and international biodiversity related MEAs and initiatives:

#### 7- The Regional Convention for Co-operation to Protect and Improve Coastal Zones and the Marine Environment (ROPME)

ROPME undertakes promotion of environmental policy, research and the implementation of joint projects in the Persian Gulf area. Pollution prevention, emergency response, biodiversity conservation and improved coastal zone management are major policies pursued.

This convention which was adopted by the Persian Gulf Littoral States in April 1978, was approved by the Iranian parliament paving the way for Iran to become an active party in protecting the marine environment in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman.

Recent activities and achievements under this convention in Iran include:

Organizing oceanography tours throughout Persian Gulf and Sea of Oman (ROPME Marine Area), Implementation of some survey projects on Persian Gulf and Sea of Oman The confirmation by Ministers' Council of Persian Gulf and Sea of Oman Area (Kuwait Convention) to establish the Marine Biodiversity Regional Center in Iran.

#### 8- UNEP Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (Tehran Convention)

The Iranian government is happy to announce that during the 7th meeting of the littoral states of the Caspian Sea, held in July 2002, Tehran, the text of UNEP Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea was finalized.

The Caspian Environment Programme (CEP) is a regional umbrella programme developed for and by the five Caspian Littoral States, Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan, aiming to halt the deterioration of environmental conditions of the Caspian Sea and to promote sustainable development in the area. The need for joint protection and management of the Caspian environment and its resources has been an ongoing issue for the Caspian States.

During the Ramsar meeting held in the Islamic Republic of Iran, in May 1998, the CEP was officially launched. Iran signed an agreement with the Caspian Sea littoral states (CEP) to combat pollution in the Caspian Sea in 1992. Some of the recent achievements under CEP include:

Compiling the drafts of four extension protocols to the framework of the convention Implementing organizational obligations in the plan of coastal areas of the Caspian Sea

Holding the second Conference of Parties to the Tehran Convention in Tehran-Iran in November 2008

#### 9- The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

The World Conservation Union brings together states, governments, and a diverse range of non-governmental organizations in a unique world partnership about 1300 members across nearly 150 countries. Its mission is to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable. Through its six Commissions, IUCN draws together over 10,000 expert volunteers.

From Iran one government organization which is the Department of Environment and four NGOs (Kanoon-Bazneshastegan-e Sazman-e Mohite Ziest, Moaseseyeh Tahghigh Va Tosee Paydare Sarzamin, Centre for Sustainable Development and Mountain Environment Protection Society) are a member of IUCN.

As a member state to IUCN, A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in November 2006 between IUCN WESCANA Regional Office and Department of Environment to hold The 6th Regional Conservation Forum (RCF) in Tehran in May 2007. This forum provided a platform for all the experts, NGOs and governments in the region to participate and exchange knowledge to provide a secure living for a just and healthy environment in line with IUCN's vision.

#### 10-Low Forest Cover Countries (LFCCs)

In large areas of the world, and especially in many developing countries, forest cover is limited in extent. In these countries, scarce forest and wooded lands are particularly significant in terms of their economic, social, cultural, environmental and subsistence values. Low forest cover poses special challenges in meeting national needs through sustainable development and ensuring adequate access to the many goods and services provided by forests, including wood and non-wood products, watershed protection, soil conservation, biodiversity conservation and carbon storage. Strategies for rehabilitation and conservation of forests are crucial steps towards sustainable development in low forest cover areas

The progress in implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/International Forum on Forests Proposals for Action relating to Low Forest Cover Countries (LFCCs). Reference was made to national reports to the CSD, CBD and CCD, among other sources. The definition of LFCCs; here a threshold of less than 10% land area covered by forest was adopted, giving a total of 67 LFCCs.

The expert meeting held in Tehran, 1999, helped greatly to provide clear guidance on the issues that are most important for forest management in LFCCs. The launch of the Tehran Process and the founding of its secretariat represent additional steps forward. However, progress has been slow in establishing the full capability of the process and its secretariat, and additional international resources are needed to make the expected progress. There is little evidence that restoration of degraded forests or reestablishment of native forest landscapes has been given any priority. It is also difficult to assess what level of progress has been made in forest conservation among LFCCs.

Data on unique forest types and their protections are limited. Technical and institutional capacities have been identified by most LFCCs as serious limitations in progress towards implementing the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action, and especially drafting and implementation of national forest programmes. International co-operation and financial assistance are required to help remedy these problems. Donor countries and institutions will need to recognise the importance of forests to poverty alleviation in LFCCs and make long-term commitments of resources in order to assist them in improving their capacities. LFCCs themselves need to accord higher priority to forest issues, including the mobilization of domestic resources.

As recommended by the 14th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), the Conference of the Parties is invited to adopt a decision on this matter along the following lines:

Takes note of the importance of collaboration with all relevant regional and international bodies mandated to promote conservation and sustainable use of various types of forests, including those in countries with low forest cover (LFCCs) and fragile forest ecosystems;

Requests the Executive Secretary to explore, together with the Low Forest Cover Countries (LFCCs) secretariat, the possibility for developing a workplan, including identification, development and implementation of targeted joint activities to support Parties, in particular developing countries with low forest cover, in the implementation of the programme of work on forest biodiversity;

### 11-International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources (ITPGRFA)

The objectives of this Treaty are the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their use, in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity. These resources are essential for achieving sustainable agriculture and food security, while no country is self sufficient in genetic resources. Therefore, the newly established Treaty can play an instrumental role in the fight against hunger and poverty and for the achievement of Millennium Development Goals 1 and 7. Iran has played a very constructive role for achieving such an important international agreement through:

Being a bureau member (vice-chair) of the Contact Group for Negotiating the Treaty under FAO

Being the only developing country hosting the Contact Group Meeting (in June 2000, Tehran)

Co-Chairing the very delicate negotiations on ANNEX 1 Crops

Chairing the Panel of Experts for developing the list of food crops

Chairing the Panel of Experts for developing the list of forage crops

Chairing the Near East Group since 2000 in the Treaty negotiation meetings

Chairing the Third Party Beneficiary (TPB) Committee

Co-chairing the Ad hoc Advisory Working Group on Compliance and Issues of Non-compliance

A bureau member (vice-chair) of the Governing Body of the Treaty

### 12-Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA)

The fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of these resources has for the first time been practically implemented at the international level through the development and Implementation of SMTA of the Treaty. Iran has served as the bureau member of the contact group for negotiation of the SMTA and played a key role in settling the benefit sharing rate (1.1% of the seed sale) for the genetic material accessed from the multilateral system of the Treaty.

### 13-Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA)

The Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in FAO is a permanent International forum where members work to raise international awareness for the conservation of genetic resources and develop global policies related to biodiversity for food and agriculture. Iran is currently chairing the Commission which has a membership of 171 countries and the European Union. Iran has been an active member since the establishment of the Commission in 1983 and served in its Bureau as vice-chair for the Near East Region for more than ten years. The Commission has provided the forum for negotiations that established other international instruments such as:

International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

Global Plan of Action for Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources (GPA-Plant)

Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources (GPA-An)

#### 14-Global Crop Diversity Trust (GCDT)

GCDT is a unique public-private partnership which established an endowment fund for providing appropriate and continuous funding for key crop genetic resources, in eternity. In line with the ITPGRFA and the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, GCDT's goal is to advance an efficient and sustainable global system of ex situ conservation by promoting the rescue, understanding, sustainable use and long-term conservation of valuable plant genetic resources. Iran worked closely with the Trust in developing Global Strategies for conservation of several important crop genetic resources. Iran has also played a key role in developing Regional Strategy for conservation of plant genetic resources in the Near East.

#### 15-International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) is an international plant health agreement, established in 1952, that aims to protect cultivated and wild plants by preventing the introduction and spread of pests. The Convention extends beyond the protection of cultivated plants to the protection of natural flora and plant products. Iran is an active member of this convention and plays a regionally distinct role in orchestrating regional plant health regulation and control measures.

#### 16-Consultative Groups on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

The CGIAR is a strategic alliance of members, partners and international agricultural centres that mobilizes science to benefit the poor. Objective of CGIAR are:

Food for People: Create and accelerate sustainable increases in the productivity and production of healthy food by and for the poor.

Environment for People: Conserve, enhance and sustainably use natural resources and biodiversity to improve the livelihoods of the poor in response to climate change and other factors.

Policies for People: Promote policy and institutional change that will stimulate agricultural growth and equity to benefit the poor, especially rural women and other disadvantaged groups.

Iran and CGIAR have a long history of close cooperation in advancing agricultural research and development in Iran and CWANA region. CGIAR has established subregional offices for three CGIAR international centres in Iran including:

International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre  
International Centre for Agriculture Research in the Dry Areas  
International Water Management Institute

## 17-Bioversity International

Bioversity International is the world's leading organization dedicated to researching on agricultural biodiversity to improve people's lives. This Institute in partnership with other CGIAR centres, national agricultural research systems and centres of excellence seeks sustainable solutions to meet three important challenges: Malnutrition and hidden hunger of missing micronutrients Sustainability and resilience in food supplies and farming systems Conservation and Use of agricultural biodiversity, ensuring that these resources remain accessible to all Iran has, particularly, collaborated with Bioversity International and the CGIAR centres in the region in enhancing the capacity of national programs on genetic resources in the countries of the CWANA and Africa region through organizing technical workshops and joint training programs.

In addition to the above said conventions and agreements, Iran has been engaged in some negotiations for a number of other regional environmental agreements on establishing new mechanisms for conservation matters. For instance to recognize importance of environmental issues and the similar environmental structure characterizing the countries in the region, cooperation among the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) member states<sup>10</sup> is of prime importance. Other regional environmental issues also must be resolved through coordination, collective efforts, political will and cooperation of governments and private entities of the countries within the region. Also ECO Institute of Environmental Science and Technologies (ECO-UEST) has been established in Iran for the ECO region to support awareness raising and capacity building in environmental research and trainings.