

Thematic reports on Forest Ecosystems

for the

Convention on Biological Diversity

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Submission	
Signature of officer responsible for submitting national report:	
Date of submission:	June 2001

Please provide summary information on the process by which this report has been prepared, including information on the types of stakeholders who have been actively involved in its preparation and on material which was used as a basis for the report

The present document is the Thematic Report of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Forest Ecosystems to the Convention on Biological Diversity. It was drawn up with the support from the "National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)" Project Secretariat, under the supervision of a Steering Committee, including representatives of Department of Administration and Planning, the Department of Environment, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Jihad-e-Keshavarzi, Ministry of Oil, Ministry of Science, Technology and Research, Biodiversity sub-committee of the National Committee for Sustainable Development (NCSD), University of Tehran and Environmentalists Association(NGO).

Decision IV/7 on Forest biological Diversity

1. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this decision by your country?					
a) High		b) Medium	√	c) Low	
2. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?					
a) Good		b) Adequate		c) Limiting	√
				d) Severely limiting	

3. Has your country assessed the status and trends of its forest biological diversity and identified options for its conservation and sustainable use? (Decision IV/7, paragraph 12)	
a) no	√
b) assessment underway (please give details below)	
c) assessment completed (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	

<i>If a developing country Party or a Party with economy in transition -</i>	
4. Has your country requested assistance through the financial mechanism for projects that promote the implementation of the focused work programme on forest biological diversity? (Decision IV/7, paragraph 7)	
a) no	√
b) yes (please give details below)	

Programme element 1: Holistic and inter-sectoral ecosystem approaches that integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking account of social and cultural and economic considerations

5. Has your country identified methodologies for enhancing the integration of forest biological diversity conservation and sustainable use into an holistic approach to sustainable forest management at the national level? (Work Programme, paragraph 13)	
a) no	√
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not applicable	
6. Has your country developed methodologies to advance the integration of traditional forest-related knowledge into sustainable forest management, in accordance with Article 8(j)? (Work Programme, paragraph 14)	
a) no	√
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not applicable	
7. Has your country promoted cooperation on the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological resources at all levels in accordance with Articles 5 and 16 of the Convention? (Work Programme, paragraph 15)	
a) no	
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	√
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not applicable	

8. Has your country promoted the sharing of relevant technical and scientific information on networks at all levels of protected forest areas and networking modalities in all types of forest ecosystems? (Work Programme, paragraph 17)	
a) no	√
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not applicable	

Programme element 2: Comprehensive analysis of the ways in which human activities, in particular forest-management practices, influence biological diversity and assessment of ways to minimize or mitigate negative influences

9. Has your country promoted activities for an enhanced understanding of positive and negative human influences on forest ecosystems by land-use managers, policy makers, scientists and other relevant stakeholders) (Work Programme, paragraph 29)	
a) minimal activity	√
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
10. Has your country promoted activities to assemble management experiences and scientific, indigenous and local information at the national and local levels to provide for the sharing of approaches and tools that lead to improved forest practices with regard to forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 30)	
a) minimal activity	√
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
11. Has your country promoted activities with the aim of providing options to minimize or mitigate negative and to promote positive human influences on forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 31)	
a) minimal activity	√
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
12. Has your country promoted activities to minimize the impact of harmful alien species on forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 32)	
a) minimal activity	√
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
13. Has your country identified means and mechanisms to improve the identification and prioritisation of research activities related to influences of human activities, in particular forest management practices, on forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 33)	
a) minimal activity	√
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	

14. Does your country hold research results and syntheses of reports of relevant scientific and traditional knowledge on key forest biological diversity issues and, if so, have these been disseminated as widely as possible? (Work Programme, paragraph 34)	
a) not relevant	
b) some relevant material, but not widely disseminated	√
c) significant material that could be more widely disseminated (please give details below)	
d) yes - already widely disseminated (please give details below)	
15. Has your country prepared case-studies on assessing impacts of fires and alien species on forest biological diversity and their influences on the management of forest ecosystems and savannahs? (Work Programme, paragraph 35)	
a) no - please indicate below whether this is due to a lack of available case-studies or for other reasons	
b) yes - please give below any views you may have on the usefulness of the preparation of case-studies for developing a better biological understanding of the problem and/or better management responses.	√

Programme element 3: Methodologies necessary to advance the elaboration and implementation of criteria and indicators for forest biological diversity

16. Has your country assessed experiences gained in national and regional processes, identifying common elements and gaps in existing initiatives and improving indicators for forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 43)	
a) minimal activity	√
b) yes - limited assessment made (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant assessment made (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
17. Has your country carried out taxonomic studies and inventories at the national level which provide for a basic assessment of forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 43)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes - limited assessment made (please give details below)	√
c) yes - significant assessment made (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	

If you have ticked any of the boxes in questions 5 to 17 above which invite you to provide further details, please do so here.

(Information can include descriptions of methodologies and of activities undertaken, reasons for success or failure, outcomes and lessons learned)

Forest policy in Iran has never been rigidly defined. The permanent modification of the forest sector and the formation of forest policy have taken on specific character only within the past fifty years. The sector has been primarily preoccupied with the northern forests because of their importance to the economy. Before land reform, the northern forestlands belonged to "**khans**" and other large estates included royal forests. In 1962, ownership of the royal forests was transferred to the government and with nationalisation of forests and rangelands; all forests were eventually consigned to government supervision. The execution of industrial forest projects accompanied by traditional exploitation by the rural community has widely destroyed the northern forests. Even the enormous investments by the forest industry during the past twenty years have not led to a policy of forest conservation because of the insufficient attention given to the specific socio-economic problems of the rural population.

In spite of these existing obstacles, the forest sector has prepared projects for nearly one million hectares of commercial forests. The projects include several technical aspects, such as forest inventory, silviculture, afforestation and construction of roads and transport of wood. Simultaneous with the implementation of these projects, consideration has been given to the problem of destruction of the natural forests and execution of new plantation projects. By 1990, forest projects involved nearly 700,000 hectares of commercial forest. Iran is relatively poor in terms of available forest area, and thus vulnerable to rapid destruction. One of the problems threatening Iranian forests is illegal logging, over and above the logging permits issued by General Office of Natural Resources. Rural people who reside with their livestock in the forests also threaten biodiversity assets. There have been relocation efforts, but they have not been completed. Another source of forest destruction is the large number of fires. In 1996, during a national study, 439 fires were recorded, affecting a total forest area of 5829 ha.

GUIDELINES FOR DETAILED THEMATIC REPORTS ON FOREST ECOSYSTEMS

The following format for preparation of a thematic report on forest ecosystems is a series of questions based on those elements of decision IV/7 of the Conference of the Parties that are addressed to Contracting Parties. Responses to these questions will help Contracting Parties to review the extent to which they are successfully implementing the provisions of the Convention and will assist the Conference of the Parties to assess the overall status of implementation of the Convention. The wording of questions follows the wording of the decision as closely as possible.

The questions are simple in nature in order to facilitate completion of the review. In most cases they require only a tick in one or more boxes. 1/ Following the questions there is a box for further comments. Contracting Parties are invited to provide a more detailed response to the preceding questions at this point. 2/ This is an opportunity to identify particular successes or constraints. In particular this box could be used to identify cases where the reporting of no action or of a partial fulfillment of the obligation is the result of inadequate resources or a need for assistance, rather than a decision not to take action on a particular obligation.

The information provided by Contracting Parties will not be used to rank performance or to otherwise compare implementation between individual Contracting Parties.

In order to assist with the review and synthesis of the information in the reports, respondents are asked to ensure that the further information provided in this box is closely related to the preceding questions and is as succinct as possible. There is no set limit on length, but it is anticipated that Parties will be able to provide adequate and useful information in a few pages.

Contracting Parties are also invited to communicate any issues relevant to implementation of these provisions of the Convention that have not been addressed by the questions below. The Executive Secretary would also welcome any comments on the adequacy of the questions, and difficulties in completing the questions, and any further recommendations on how these reporting guidelines could be improved.

It is recommended that Contracting Parties involve a wide range of stakeholders in the preparation of the report, in order to ensure a participatory and transparent approach to its development. A box is provided in which to identify those groups who have been involved.

1/ If you feel that, in order to properly reflect the circumstances, it is necessary to tick more than one box, please do so. In this case, you are encouraged to provide further information in the box at the end of the set of questions.

2/ Please feel free to append to the report further information on any of the questions.

Contracting Parties are requested to submit their thematic report on forest ecosystems in this format to the Executive Secretary by 15 May 2001. Parties are requested to submit an original signed copy by post and an electronic copy on diskette or by electronic mail. An electronic version of this document will be sent to all national focal points and this will also be available from the Convention's website at:

<http://www.biodiv.org>

Completed national reports and any comments should be sent to:

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