

## Assam State Biodiversity Board

### Draft Notification

#### Declaration of Majuli as a Biodiversity Heritage Site

In exercise of the power conferred by sub section (1) of section-37 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 (No.18 of 2003) and Rule 24(1) of the Assam Biodiversity Rules 2010, the State Government intends to notify Majuli River Island under Majuli District as a 'Biodiversity Heritage Site' of Assam, as proposed by the Assam State Biodiversity Board.

The Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Sri Jadav Molai Payeng constituted for evaluation of the proposal discussed the matter on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016 at Majuli and recommended such a declaration. The Committee observed that Majuli river island fulfils the following criteria for notification as a Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS):

1. Presence of mosaic of natural, semi-natural and man-made habitats with rich diversity of life forms.
2. Rich diversity of wild as well as domesticated species of flora and fauna and their wild ancestors or intra-specific categories.
3. Presence of endemic, rare and threatened species, keystone species, species of evolutionary significance etc.
4. Presence of areas that provides an ideal habitat for seasonal migrant species for feeding and breeding.
5. Presence of areas that offer refuge or corridors for threatened and endemic flora and fauna.
6. Areas with pre-eminence of cultural, ethical or aesthetic values and maintenance of cultural diversity, with or a long history.

The Committee clarified that "the declaration of 'Majuli River Island' as a BHS will **not** put any restrictions on local communities regarding prevailing practices and usages of local resources, other than those voluntarily decided by the people. The purpose of declaring BHS is to enhance the quality of life of the local communities through conservation of existing resources".

*This draft notification is issued in public interest and for seeking suggestions and comments from various stakeholders on the matter within **30 days** from the date of publication of this notification. The comments/ suggestions may be sent either by email to [assambioboard@gmail.com](mailto:assambioboard@gmail.com) or by posts at Assam State Biodiversity Board, Aranya Bhawan, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Panjabari, Guwahati-781037.*

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Member Secretary-ASBB