

## **Assam State Biodiversity Board** *( a statutory body of government of Assam)*

Assam State Biodiversity Board invites proposals from concerned Government Departments, Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), Local bodies (Gram Sabha, Anchalik Panchayats or Zilla Parishad), Urban Bodies / Wards, other relevant community institutions, forest protection committees, Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) / Eco-Development Committees (EDCs) or tribal Councils in Assam for declaration of ecologically significant sites as 'Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS) in Assam. The purpose of declaring BHS is to enhance the quality of life of the local communities through conservation of such sites.

**Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS)** are unique ecosystems having rich biodiversity comprising of any one or more of the following components:

- ✓ richness of wild as well as domesticated species or intra-specific categories,
- ✓ high endemism,
- ✓ presence of rare and threatened species, keystone species, species of evolutionary significance,
- ✓ wild ancestors of domestic/cultivated species or their varieties,
- ✓ past pre-eminence of biological components represented by fossil beds and having significant cultural, ethical or aesthetic values and are important for the maintenance of cultural diversity, with or without a long history of human association with them.

*[All other terms used are as defined in Section 2 of the Biological Diversity Act (2002)]*

### **Legal Framework:**

- Under Section- 37 of Biological Diversity Act, 2002 the State Government in consultation with local bodies may notify areas of biodiversity importance as Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS).

- Under sub-section (2) of Section-37, the State Government in consultation with the Central Government may frame rules for the management and conservation of BHS.
- Under sub section (3) of Section 37, the State Governments shall frame schemes for compensating or rehabilitating any person or section of people economically affected by such notification.

**Explanation:** “The creation of BHS may **not** put any restriction on the prevailing practices and usages of the local communities, other than those voluntarily decided by them. The purpose of declaring BHS is to enhance the quality of life of the local communities through conservation of such sites.”

### **Identification / evaluation criteria**

The Proposals for declaration of BHS would be examined in accordance with following characteristics

- a. Areas that contain a mosaic of natural, semi-natural, and man made habitats, which together contain a significant diversity of life forms.
- b. Areas that contain significant domesticated biodiversity component and /or representative agro-ecosystems with ongoing agricultural practices that sustain this diversity.
- c. Areas that are significant from a biodiversity point of view as also are important cultural spaces such as sacred groves/trees and sites, or other large community conserved areas.
- d. Areas including very small ones that offer refuge or corridors for threatened and endemic fauna and flora, such as community conserved areas or urban greens and wetlands.
- e. All kinds of legal land uses whether government, community or private land could be considered under the above categories.
- f. As far as possible those sites may be considered which are not covered under Protected Area network under the Wildlife Protection Act 1972 as amended.
- g. Areas that provide habitats, aquatic or terrestrial, for seasonal migrant species for feeding and breeding.
- h. Areas that are maintained as preservation plots by the research wing of Forest department.

- i. Medicinal Plant Conservation Areas.

**Who can Submit Proposals:**

Proposals for declaration of BHS may be submitted by the local Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) , Local bodies (Gram Sabha, Anchalik Panchayats or Zilla Parishad), Urban Bodies / Wards, other relevant community institutions, forest protection committees, Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) / Eco-Development Committees ( EDCs) or tribal Councils

**Note:** Government Line Departments ( Agriculture, Horticulture, Fisheries, Veterinary, Panchayat & Rural Development, Education and others) NGOs, Research and Educational Institutes may encourage / assist the local bodies/organizations in submission of their proposals.

**Facilitators :**

The Divisional Forest Officers and their sub-ordinate offices ( such as Range Offices / Beat Offices) shall act as Facilitators in preparation and submission of proposals for declaration of BHS in Assam.

However, the proposals can be submitted directly to:

**The Member Secretary- Assam State Biodiversity Board,  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Paryatan Bhawan,  
Rehabari,  
Guwahati-781008**

*The detailed Guidelines for BHS can be downloaded from our website:  
[www.asbb.gov.in](http://www.asbb.gov.in) (Whats New Section)*

**Last Date: The last date for submission of proposals is 31<sup>st</sup> May 2015.**

**PROPOSAL FOR DECLARATION OF BIODIVERSITY HERITAGE SITE IN ASSAM**

1. Details of the proposer:

- a. Name:
- b. Address:
- c. Contact:
- d. Nature proposer (whether legal body / SHG etc)

*( if there are more than one proposers, please give details of each)*

2. Details of the area proposed:

- a. General details of location: (please indicate location by specifying )
  - i. District
  - ii. Sub-Division
  - iii. Block
  - iv. Village (s)
  - v. Sketch map showing adjacent landmarks
- b. Specific details of the location:
  - i. Geo-coordinates ( latitude / longitude)
  - ii. Boundary description ( natural as well as artificial)
  - iii. Map of the area (to the scale, if possible)
  - iv. Area
- c. Ownership details:
  - i. Whether community land / public land / private land / grazing land / fallow land etc. (enclosed certificate of ownership)
  - ii. Details of the owners ( individual (s) / Community (ies) / Departments)
  - iii. Whether free from encumbrances / legal cases etc..

- d. Existing Rights / Concessions if any granted or enjoyed by the community or individuals.

3. Technical Details of the Proposal

- a. Primary ecological significance of the area proposed: (Please give a concise explanatory note against each)
  - i. Whether the area contains a mosaic of natural, semi-natural, and man-made habitats, which together contain a significant diversity of life forms?
  - ii. Whether the area contains significant domesticated biodiversity component and /or representative agro-ecosystems with ongoing agricultural practices that sustain this diversity?
  - iii. Whether the area is significant from a biodiversity point of view as also important cultural space such as sacred groves/trees and sites, or other large community conserved areas?
  - iv. Whether the area offers refuge or corridors for threatened and endemic fauna and flora, such as community conserved areas or urban greens and wetlands?
  - v. Whether the area provides habitats, aquatic or terrestrial, for seasonal migrant species for feeding and breeding?
  - vi. Whether the area has a long conservation history or been maintained as preservation plots by Forest Department or any other government department?
    - i. Whether the area has immense medicinal plant diversity
- b. Community / Institutional significance of the proposed area specially with reference to local natural resources and their interface with the local people.
- c. Any profound historical, cultural, or economic uniqueness or feature that signifies natural resource availability / management

4. Major objectives of the Proposal:

5. Specific interventions envisioned

**Declaration by the Proposer**

I hereby affirm that, I am the authorized person on behalf of .....(Name of the Agency) to make the proposal for declaration of the site ..... as Biodiversity Heritage Site.

This proposal is based on the resolution adopted by the ..... in its meeting held on ..... In the presence of ..... (mention quoram & number of members present) members present and voting.

(Please enclose an original ink signed copy of the resolution adopted in this regard).

I hereby declare that the information contained in this proposal is factually correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

.....

(Signature of the Authorized Person)

Name:

Contact No:

E-mail: