

Minutes of 24th Meeting of Assam State Biodiversity Board held on 27th November 2018 at Conference hall of Chief Secretary- Assam, 3rd Floor, C-Block, Assam Secretariat, Dispur

The 24th meeting of the Assam State Biodiversity Board was held on 27th November, 2018 in the Conference hall of Chief Secretary- Assam, 3rd Floor, C-Block, Assam Secretariat, Dispur.

A list of the Members and invitees present in the meeting is at **Annexure-I**.

At the outset, the Board felicitated Shri Alok Kumar, IAS, Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam as the new Chairperson of the Biodiversity Board.

The Chairperson welcomed everyone present in the meeting and requested the Member secretary to initiate Agenda-wise discussions.

Agenda Item-2: The Minutes of the 23rd Meeting of the Board were confirmed.

Agenda Item-3: The Board was informed of the following actions taken on agenda of previous meetings:

- i. The following proposal of the Board was under consideration of the Government:
 - a. Amendment to the Assam Biodiversity Rules-2010: The Cabinet Note circulated to legislative department for comments.
- ii. Three new Technical Support Group (TSG) notified in Udalguri, Baksa and Hojai District. For the remaining districts, the matter is being actively pursued with concerned Deputy Commissioners.

Agenda Item- 4: The Board was informed that:

- i. The MoEF & CC, New Delhi notified 14 species (7 plants & 7 animals) of Assam as Threatened Species under Section-38 of the Biological Diversity Act 2002, vide notification no. S.O. 3846 (E) dated 2nd August 2018.
 - A press notice for public/ researchers (in Assamese and English language) was issued in local newspaper for publication.
 - The Notification was sent to all Forest Divisions shortly.
- ii. The 8th Batch of Biodiversity Research Associate Program started on 1st September 2018 with 16 Fellows for Barak Valley.
 - These Fellows were assigned to 16 Biodiversity Management Committees in preparation of their Peoples' Biodiversity Registers (PBR)
 - i. Karimganj: 7 Fellows
 - ii. Hailakandi: 1 Fellow
 - iii. Cachar: 8 Fellows
 - The fellowship is for a duration of three months, w.e.f. 1st September, 2018 to 30th November, 2018

- iii. All the proposed 229 Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), have been constituted in the State as per details given below:
 - a. 189 BMCs in 189 Anchalik Panchayats of the state.
 - b. 21BMCs in Bodoland Territorial Council
 - c. 10 BMCs in Karbi-Anglong Autonomous Council
* In addition, 5 BMCs proposed at West Karbi Anglong District
 - d. 9 BMCs in Dima Hasao Autonomous Council.
(BMCs are constituted at Forest Range level at the Autonomous Councils).
➤ *The Board suggested to re-notify the existing 189 BMCs at Panchayat level after Panchayat Election 2018.*
- iv. The following was the status on preparation of People's Biodiversity Registers in the State:
 - a. Approved by the TSG : 25
 - b. Final draft received : 67
 - c. Works on going : 41
- v. The status of formation of Technical Support Group (TSG) in the State is as below:
 - a. Target : 33 Districts
 - b. Total TSG notified : 27 Districts *(including new 3 TSG after last Board meeting)*
 - c. Yet to be constituted : 6 Districts (List at **Annexure-II**)
- vi. Research Advisory Committee (RAC): The Board also noted the constitution of RAC to examine the research proposals received by the Board.
 - a. Tenure: 2 years (from the date of issue)
 - b. First meeting of the RAC was held on 22nd November 2018 at Panjabari to review the 5 proposals received by the Board for financial assistance.
 - c. The Board agreed to the suggestions made by the RAC (**Annexure-III**)
- vii. The progress on research projects/ studies:
 - a. Plant Diversity Assessment of Dima Hasao district: The third six monthly progress report had received.
 - b. Enhancing conservation efforts in Hoollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary: draft version of the 30 minutes documentary "The Legends of Hollongapar" had received. Draft coffee table book is due in November 2018.
➤ *It was suggested to develop a shorter promo version of the documentary for about 5 minutes duration.*
 - c. Nature Learning Centre (NLC), Assam: The Board noted the following progress of the project:
 - i. 39 Nature Conservation Clubs (NCC) formed across the State.
 - ii. 10 awareness programs organised.

- iii. First batch of visitors from Sialmari High School, Darrang District Nature Conservation Club visited the Ex-situ conservation site at Assam State Zoo.
- iv. Curriculum for Class VIII, IX and X revised (Assamese) has been developed and submitted to PCCF & HoFF- Assam.
- v. Publication of Knowledge products:
 - o Information brochure of NLC in Assamese and English.
 - o Nature conservation club Activity Booklet in Assamese and English.
- d. Documentation of tradable bio-resources and associated traditional knowledge from the local communities of Assam for establishing Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) Provisions: The Board noted the progress made so far.
 - i. 266 local markets surveyed at 20 districts
 - ii. A total of 572 tradable bio-resources documented including 116 medicinal plants.
 - iii. 57 Bio-resources based drug manufacturing industries were identified from 14 Districts of Assam.
- viii. The Board was informed that the following Grants were received by the Board: April 2018 to September 2018 (1st and 2nd quarter)

• From NBA:	Rs. 18,77,786/-
o Peer to Peer Learning=	Rs. 3,35,000/-
o Engagement of Contractual Staff=	Rs. 10,42,851/-
o Reimbursement of Expenditure incurred celebration of International Bio Day 2018:	Rs. 4,99,935/-
• Bank Interest	Rs. 14,54,456/-
• Other Income (Sale of Books)	Rs. 1,06,735/-
<u>Nature Learning Centre- Assam</u>	
• Bank Interest	Rs. 3,17,929/-
o 1st Quarter=	Rs.2,03,208/-
o 2nd Quarter=	Rs.1,14,721/-
- ix. The Board also noted the followings:
 - a. Celebration of International Day for Biological Diversity on 22nd May 2018, Diphu, Karbi Anglong.
 - b. 16 BMC level capacity building training workshops organised for strengthening the BMC members during July to September 2018
 - c. Participation at the one day 'Training Program on preparation of PBR' for the Interns of Nagaland SBB on 9th October 2018 at Kohima.
 - d. Participation at the workshop on "Development and Implementation of ABS Legal framework" from 22nd to 25 October, 2018 at Chennai.
 - e. Regarding operation of the funds, nomination of the senior FAO of office of the PCCF and HoFF, Assam for rendering his services to the Board and joint operation of Board account.

- f. Publications of the Board:
 - i. Brochure “Karbi Anglong, Moving ahead for Biodiversity Conservation”.
 - ii. Booklet “Access and Benefit Sharing-a mechanism for empowering local people” (English).
 - iii. Draft Annual Report for FY 2017-18: The Board suggested to forward the soft copy of the same to all the Board members for their comments, if any by 10th December 2018. Thereafter, it may be published.

Agenda Item-5: The Board ratified the following:

- i. Expenditure incurred
 - g. 1st and 2nd quarter(April 2018 to September, 2018)
 - i. State Grant : Rs.11,86,009/-
 - ii. NBA Grant : Rs.20,89,437/-*
 - iii. APFBC Grant : Rs.11,15,275/-
 - iv. NTPC Fund (Liability):Rs.19,95,840/-

Total= Rs. 63,86,561/-

**Out of Rs. 20,89,437/- expended from NBA grant, a sum of Rs. 5,20,000/- was released to the BMC's of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC).*

- h. An amount of Rs. 1,80,371/- was paid on 05/11/2018 to Shri Darash Mathur, Ex-Chairman of ASBB as arrear salary for the period 21st December 2016 to 31st December 2016 & Revised allowances for the period 1st July 2017 to 29th August 2017

i. **Others:**

Nature Learning Centre-Assam project

- 1st and 2nd quarter(April 2018 to September, 2018)
 - a. Salary= Rs.9,02,834
 - b. Travel= Rs. 52,840
 - c. Contingency= Rs. 17,314
 - d. Stationeries= Rs. 68,949
 - e. Activity& Other = Rs. 2,33,772
 - f. Equipments= Rs. 5,87,396
 - g. Bank Charges= Rs. 30

Total= Rs. 18,63,135/-

- ii. 15 Research Permissions granted by the Board to the following. Details at **Annexure-IV**

Agenda Item-6: The following matters were placed before the Board for consideration and approval:

- a. Local Biodiversity Fund for strengthening the BMCs: the Board suggested to revise the proposal for Grant-in-aid with detail activities keeping in mind the capacity for expenditure.

- b. Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS): It was suggested that some case study may be developed in the context of Assam and thereafter the matter could be discussed for application fee etc.
- c. Draft Service regulation: It was suggested that the proposal may be re-submitted after approval of the amendment of the Assam Biodiversity Rule-2010 to the Government for approval by the Finance department.

Agenda Item- 7: Other issues

The Board was informed about the judgement passed by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) regarding implementation of BD Act 2002 specially with refernce to formation of Biodiversity Management Committees at every local bodies within six months time.

The date and venue for the next meeting to be decided in due course.

The meeting ended with thanks from the Chair to everyone present.

Approved

-sd-

(Alok Kumar, IAS)

Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam &
Chairperson-ASBB

Members/ Invitees present in the 24th Meeting of Assam State Biodiversity Board: 27th November, 2018

Sr.	Name	Designation	Contact No.	E-mail Id
Official Members				
1	Shri Alok Kumar, IAS	Chief Secretary-Assam & Chairperson, ASBB	0361-2261120	cs-assam@nic.in
2	Shri Puru Gupta, IAS	Secretary, Environment & Forest Department, Assam	9435405810	secyforestassam@gmail.com
3	Shri Kulendra Talukdar	Secretary, Agriculture Department, Assam	9435183733	agri-dept@nic.in
4	Shri A. K. Johari, IFS	Member Secretary-ASBB	8876565345	johari60@yahoo.com
Ex- Officio Members				
5	Dr. P. C. Bhattacharjee	Expert Member- ASBB	9435148702	bhattapc@gmail.com
6	Dr. Ajit Kumar Das	Expert Member- ASBB	9435077427	dasajitkumar15@gmail.com
7	Dr. Bijoy Neog	Expert Member- ASBB	8638571325	bijoyneog@dibru.ac.in
8	Dr. Bibhab Kr. Talukdar	Expert Member- ASBB	9435113139	bibhab@aaranyak.org
Special Invitees				
9	Shri Kailash Karthik, IAS	Joint Secretary, Finance Department, Assam	9531069185	kailashkarthik@gmail.com
10	Shri Deben Malakar	Under Secretary, Animal, Husbandry & Veterinary dept. Assam	7002635398	malakardeben@gmail.com
Permanent Invitees				
11	Shri S. K. Srivastava, IFS	PCCF & HoFF- Assam	9435080510	pccfassam@gmail.com

List of Districts where Technical Support Group (TSG) yet to be constituted

1. Chirrang
2. South Salmara-Mankachar
3. Biswanath
4. Karbi Anglong
5. West Karbi Anglong
6. Dima Hasao

Suggestions made during the 1st meeting of Research Advisory Committee:

1. Develop guidelines and format for submitting Research Proposals.
2. Support priority action oriented research/studies which will benefit the local communities.
3. The Board will find out priority research works keeping in tune with ABSAP and BMC action plans.
4. The Board to consider data deficient studies such as 'Invasive Species', traditional knowledge leading to IPR etc.
5. The Board should not support Research/studies which have potential to get funding from agencies like the DST, DBT, MoEFCC etc.
6. The Board to also develop criteria for evaluation of each proposals
7. The Board may initiate two annual Research Grants:
 - i. For young Researchers (Rs 1-2 lakh; 1 year duration)
 - ii. For Professionals (Rs 5-10 Lakh; 1-2 year duration)
8. Regarding the five proposals received, the RAC members decided not to consider them in its present forms.
9. One of the proposal "*Ethnic Foodplants in Karbi-Anglong: Diversity, Traditional Knowledge and local health*" may be asked to modify and resubmitted as per revised call for proposals.

The following 15 (fifteen) Research Proposals was granted no objection by the Board:

1. Ms.RotoYalyo, Research Scholar, Dept. of Environmental Science, Tezpur University for the research study "*connectivity between fluvial seed dispersal and riparian vegetation along Brahmaputra River*"
2. Prof. P. K. Saikia, HoD of Zoology Department, Gauhati University for the research studies titled "*Biodiversity of Eastern Himalaya and North bank landscape of river Brahmaputra in Assam*"
3. Dr. MousumiGhose, Post-doctoral Fellow of Dr. Uma Ramakrishnan's lab at National Centre for Biological Research, Bangalore, for research project "*Conservation status of Gyps vulture through a genomic lens in selected PAs of Assam*"
4. Dr. Munmun Sarma, Prof. Department of Veterinary Anatomy & Histology, AAU for the research project "*Species identification of wild herbivores based on molecular, microscopic and ultrastructural characterization of hair samples*"
5. Dr. GitamaniDutta, Programme Officer, Balipara Foundation, Guwahati for the research study "*Quantitative assessment and mapping of plant diversity and biological resources in Upper and Lower Assam*".
6. Dr. K. N. Nair, Senior Principal Scientist, CSIR, Lucknow for research study "*Phylogeography and population genetic structure of Indian wild bananas (Ensetesuperbum and Enseteglaucum)*".
7. Dr. K. N. Nair, Senior Principal Scientist, CSIR, Lucknow for research study "*Integrative Taxonomic Analysis for Assessment of Diversity and Phylogenetic Relationships among Citrus and Quercus from Northeast Region*"
8. Dr. T. S. Rana, Senior Principla Scientist, CSIR, Lucknow for the research study "*Taxonomic revision and Phylogeny of the genus UrariaDesv. In India*"
9. Ms.ReshmiBhatacharjee, PhD. Research Scholar, Gauhati University for the research study "*Diversity and distribution of butterflies in Manas NP, Assam*".
10. Ms.AnantaRai, PhD. Research Scholar, Sikkim University, for the research study "*Ecology, distribution and phylogeny of Takydromussikkimensis in North East India including Darjeeling Hills*".
11. Dr. K. Sankar, Director, SACON, for the study "*Establishment of National Avian Forensic Laboratory at SACON for National Certification for Illegal Trafficking of Birds*".
12. Prof. Sathyabhama Das Biju, Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Delhi, for the research study "*Molecular Phylogeny, Call Evolution and Systematics of Indian Frogs*".
13. Prof. Sathyabhama Das Biju, Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Delhi, for the research study "*Diversity & Distribution of Freshwater Fishes in Assam*".
14. Ms Debolina Dey, PhD. Research Scholar, Gauhati University, for the research study "*Taxonomic study of the genus Syzygium R. Br. Ex Gaertn in Assam*"

15. Ms.SurabhiRanavat, PhD. Research Scholar, IISR, Bhopal, for the research study “*Pollination ecology & phylogenetic analysis of the genus Alpinia in selected areas of Assam*”.