

DRAFT

**Minutes of 25th Meeting of Assam State Biodiversity Board held on 24th October 2019
at Conference hall of Chief Secretary- Assam, 3rd Floor, C-Block, Assam Secretariat,
Dispur**

The 25th meeting of the Assam State Biodiversity Board was held on 24th October, 2019 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**.

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

Agenda item 1: The minutes of the 24th Board meeting were confirmed

Agenda item 2: The Board noted that the Assam Biodiversity Rules Amendment proposal had been finalized. It was suggested that the Amendment proposal may be presented before the Addl. Chief Secretary, (E & F) and Chief Secretary-Assam.

Agenda item 3: The Board was informed of the following:

- i. In the matter related to orders of the NGT in the OA No. 347/2016 dated 09.08.2019, significant progress was made in formation of Biodiversity Management Committees (BMC) at all levels of local bodies and urban bodies.
- ii. (a) The present position of constitution BMC was:
 - a. Gaon Panchayat (GP) = 2188 (new)
 - b. Anchalik Panchayat (AP) = 189 (old)
 - c. Zila Parishad (ZP) = 25 (new)
 - d. Autonomous council (AC) = 40 (old)
 - e. Municipal Board (MB) = 100 (New)
 - f. Municipal Corporation (MC) = 1 (New)

(b) With regard to the status of local bodies in the Autonomous Bodies it was informed that the 128th Constitution Amendment Bill proposes to provide for setting up of local bodies in the Sixth Schedule areas. Only after this Amendment, legally recognized local bodies would be in place. For the present, the court may be informed of the manner in which 40 BMCs have been constituted in these areas.

(c) The Board complimented the Department of Panchayat and Rural Development (P&RD) and Urban Development Department (UDD) for their efforts in constitution of BMC in a short time.

iii. (a) AT Anchalik Panchayat level 110 People's Biodiversity Registers (PBR) completed and works ongoing at 119 APs. The Board suggested that an approach paper may be prepared describing the manner in which the Board proposes to pool in financial and manpower resources for completing preparation of PBR at all levels as directed by the NGT. To ascertain the tentative cost involved, Short-Tender / Bids may be invited. This approach paper with financial projection may be submitted to the Hon'ble Court in the form of an affidavit.

(b) The Member Secretary-ASBB explained that in a recently held meeting of State Biodiversity Boards with MoEF&CC and National Biodiversity Authority, New Delhi, it had been agreed to first prepare PBRs at the middle level i.e. Anchalik Panchayat (AP) level as prepared by Assam SBB. These PBRs can then adopted by the constituent Gaon Panchayats. Similarly, the Zilla Parishad (ZP) PBR can be assemblage of PBRs of constituent Anchalik PBRs. The necessary additional details, such as, names of members of the BMC, knowledgeable persons, local markets etc. can be added.

(c) It was informed that the Board shall, in due course take-up updating of these PBRs in a systematic manner through a component of the French Project (APFBC Phase-II).

iv. The Board noted about the engagement of next batch Biodiversity Research Associate Fellow (BRAP) fellows.

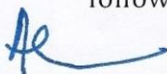
v. The Board noted completion of following three (3) projects:

- a. Plant Diversity Assessment of Dima Hasao district in Assam
- b. Enhancing conservation efforts in Hoolongapar Gibbon WLS
- c. Documentation of Tradable Bioresources of Assam

vi. The Board was informed that International Day for Biological Diversity event was celebrated at the District Library Auditorium, Haflong, Dima Hasao, on 22nd May, 2019 on the theme "Our Biodiversity, Our Food, Our Health" which was sponsored by National Biodiversity Authority (NBA).

vii. The Board was informed that 23 capacity building and awareness workshops for strengthening BMC members of BTC, Tinsukia and Sivasagar Districts were organized during the last two quarters.

viii. The Board noted participation of member Secretary-ASBB and staff at the following:



- a. Workshop on "Strategic communication for effective implementation of Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS) mechanisms" held on 11th and 12th July 2019 at New Delhi.
 - b. Workshop on 3rd Regional consultation with SBBs on Draft (revised) Guidelines on ABS held on 19th July 2019 at Kolkata.
 - c. Awareness workshop on "Threatened Animal Species of Assam" organized at Assam Don Bosco University, Tapesia on 12th June 2019.
- ix. The Board noted visit of the staff to Gujarat State Biodiversity Board and West Bengal Biodiversity Board under the Peer to Peer Learning Programme / exchange learning programme, sponsored by National Biodiversity Authority.
- x. The Board noted publication of the following materials:
- a. Tradable Bio-resources of Assam
 - b. Coffee Table Book: Legends of Hollongapar (in collaboration with Aaranyak)
 - c. Documentary: The Legends of Hollongapar (in collaboration with Aaranyak)
 - d. Annual Report: FY 2017-18.
 - e. Leaflet: Threatened Animals of Assam notified u/s 38 of the BD Act 2002.

Agenda item 4: (a) The Board noted the details of financial assistance received during the last quarter of the financial year 2018-19 and from April to September during 2019-20 as below:

i. 1st January 2019 to 31st March 2019:

- State Government=	Rs. 64,00,000.00
- i. salary	Rs. 16,00,000.00
- ii. non salary/work	Rs. 48,00,000.00
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- State Climate Change Cell (Liability)=	Rs. 70,83,580.00
- Wrongly deposited=	Rs. 83.00
- Sale of publications=	Rs. 7850.00
- Bank Interest=	Rs. 12,03,764.00
Total=	Rs. 1,46,95,277.00

ii. 1st April 2019 to 30th September 2019:

- National Biodiversity Authority =	Rs. 19,30,302.00
- International Bio-day 2019=	Rs 5,00,000.00
- Salary for contractual staff=	Rs 11,39,175.00
- Tradable Bioresources project=	Rs 2,91,127.00
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- Wrongly deposit=	Rs. 8,000.00

- State Government/ salary=	Rs. 17,11,000.00
- Sale of books=	Rs. 89,000.00
- Bank Interest=	Rs. 14,38,093.00
Total=	Rs. 51,76,395.00

(b) It was noted by the Board that an amount of Rs. 14.38 lakh has accrued as interest in the accounts of the Board. It was explained that principal amount was the deposits of the Forest Department collected by them as application fee for their recruitment exercises. The Forest Department informed that due to a court case the recruitment has not been finalized and amount has not been fully utilized

(c) The Board was informed that this amount is reflected in the accounts of the Board as a 'liability' and that neither the Principle nor the Interest of this amount had been used by the Board till date.

(d) Forest Department was requested to take appropriate action in terms of various guidelines of the Finance Department and until further orders from the Court no expenditure be made on this amount.

Agenda item 5: The Board ratified the following:

- i. Expenditure made during the last quarter of previous financial year (2018-19) and up to September 2019 during the current FY as presented in the meeting.
- ii. The no-objection granted to 23 research proposals. The details of the Research proposals are at **Annexure-II**.

Agenda item 6: The following matters were discussed for decision:

- i. The Project Evaluation Criteria and Guidelines for Research Grants of the Board were approved by the Board.
- ii. It was agreed to form an Expert Committee on Legal issues. A proposal suggesting name of Experts/Panels may be moved to Chairman for approval.
- iii. The Board approved payment of House Rent Allowance (HRA) at revised rate w.e.f. 01/04/2016 and all other benefits (Gratuity, Leave encasement, GSLI etc.) applicable to Assam Govt. Employees as per GoA Rule to the (3) three regular employees of the Board.
- iv. Dr. P. C. Bhattacharjee, an Expert Member suggested that the Board shall enhance its technical man-power and if regular positions cannot be increased the contractual positions should be made more attractive and remunerative so

that the experienced staff could be retained. Board conveyed its no-objection to the proposal subject to financial limitations.

- v. (a) On the matter of use of Interest amount earned by the Board through its own resources, it was decided that the first charge shall be for meeting unforeseen statutory dues followed by legal obligations and then the deficits. However, no fresh liabilities in the form of contractual engagement shall be created on this interest amount.
- (b) The Member, Finance Department, advised to make a proposal for deficits in remuneration of contractual staff from the budget sub-head 31-99 (Salary), of the Grant-in-aid to the Biodiversity Board
- (c) The Member Finance was requested to consider early release of the remaining grant of Rs 52.90 lakh meant for 'works' for the year 2019-20.


Any other Issue:

- i. It was brought to the notice of the Board that the present Member Secretary of the Board will retire on attaining the age of superannuation in January 2020 after serving the Board for nearly eight years. The Board recorded its appreciation for dedicated services rendered by Sri A.K. Johari, IFS, Special PCCF (Biodiversity & CC) & Member Secretary-ASBB to the Assam Biodiversity Board

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


(Alok Kumar, IAS) 5/11/2019

Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam &
Chairperson-ASBB

Annexure-I**Members/ Invitees present in the 25th Meeting of Assam State Biodiversity Board: 24th October 2019**

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 Jishnu Barua, IAS	Addl. Chief Secretary, Environment & Forest Department, Assam	0361-2237243	addlcsjbarua62@gmail.com
3	Dr. Bijoya Choudhury	Addl. Secretary, Agriculture Department, Assam	9101688345	agri-dept@nic.in, b.choudhury@gov.in
4	Shri Sanjil Choudhury	i/c Director of Fisheries Department	9435344046	
5	Shri M. Medhi	Joint Secretary, P & RD Department, Assam	9435552456	pnrddispur@gmail.com
6	Shri A. K. Johari, IFS	Member Secretary-ASBB	8876565345	johari60@yahoo.com
Ex- Officio Members				
7	Dr. P. C. Bhattacharjee	Expert Member- ASBB	9435148702	bhattapc@gmail.com
8	Dr. Ajit Kumar Das	Expert Member- ASBB	9435077427	dasajitkumar15@gmail.com
9	Dr. Bijoy Neog	Expert Member- ASBB	8638571325	bijoyneog@dibru.ac.in
10	Dr. Nirmali Medhi	Expert Member- ASBB	9435011083	nrmedhi6@gmail.com
Special Invitees				
11	Shri Samir K. Sinha, IAS	Principal Secretary, Finance Department, Assam	9910035775	principalsecretaryhealth@gmail.com
12	Shri Manojit Bujarbaruah	Engineer, GMC (Representative from the Commissioner GMC, Panbazar)	9864094122	manojit1965@gmail.com
13	Shri Ranjit Kalita	Engineer (Representative from the Director, Municipal Administration, Dispur)	9864014044	ranjitkalita.ghy@gmail.com
Permanent Invitees				
14	Shri A. M. Singh, IFS	PCCF & HoFF- Assam	9435730125	am.singh@gov.in
15	Dr. Ranjana Gupta, IFS	PCCF (Wildlife) & CWLW-Assam	8876565344	ranjanagupta2001@yahoo.com
16	Shri T. V. Reddy, IFS	Spl. PCCF (Wetlands)-Assam	9949012650	venudharifs@gmail.com

The following 23 Research Proposals was granted no objection by the Board:

1. Mr. Vivek Chetry, PhD Research Scholar, Dept. of Zoology, Gauhati University, for the research study “Diversity & Ecology of Avian fauna of Barnadi WLS”.
2. Mr. Manab Jyoti Kalita, PhD Research Scholar, Dept. of Zoology, Gauhati University, for the research study “Diversity & Ecology of Butterfly fauna of Barnadi WLS ”.
3. Mr. Keshob Jyoti Borah, , PhD Research Scholar, Dept. of Zoology, Gauhati University, for the research study “Diversity & Ecology of Spider fauna of Barnadi WLS”
4. Dr. Pankaj Chetia, Assistant Professor Department of Life Sciences, Dibrugarh University, for the research study “Diversity assessment, in vitro propagation and DNA Barcoding of Ferns & Fern-allies of Assam”.
5. Dr. Abhijit Das, Scientist D, Wildlife Institute of India for a research study on " Bio-geography of Eastern Borderland in India: Evidence from Ecto-therms”.
6. Dr. A. K. Mukherjee, Professor, Dept. of MBBT, Tezpur University, a research study on “Proteomics and transcription analysis of scorpion venoms from Assam & assessment of potency of commercial scorpion anti-venom”.
7. Mr. Sanjoy Kr. Tamuli, Fisheries Development Officer, Fishery Department, Assam for “carry out study of experimental breeding of *Chitala chitala* for ex-situ conservation under the Dept. of Fishery, Assam”.
8. Dr. A. K. Mukherjee, Professor, Dept. of MBBT, Tezpur University, a research study on " Assessment of efficacy, potency and quality of commercial anti-venoms towards the venom of poisonous snakes from NE India'.
9. Mr. Pranjal Borah, PhD Scholar, Department of Life Sciences, Dibrugarh University for research study on " Ferns & Fern-allies of Upper Brahmaputra Valley, Assam, India with special reference to spore morphology'.
10. Dr. Lalramliana, Dept. of Zoology, Pachhunga University College, Aizawl-Mizoram, for research study on "Molecular and morphological characterization of freshwater fishes of the subtribe Garraina (Teleostei: Cypriniformes) of North East India".
11. Shri Sasanka Sekhar Ghosh, Research Scholar, Department of Zoology, Cotton University, for research study on Project titled “Ecosystem health of Chandubi Lake, Kamrup district, Assam, India with special reference to aquatic insect Diversity”.
12. Ms. Birina Bhuyan, Research Scholar, Department of Botany, Bodoland University, Kokrajhar, for research study on Project titled “Studies on Taxonomy and Distribution of genus *Ophiorrhiza* Linn. (Rubiaceae) of Assam”.
13. Dr. Priyadarsana Dharma Rajan Senior Fellow (Professor), Ashoka Trust for Research in ecology and Environment, Bangalore-560064, for research study on Project titled “Monitoring Ants and dung beetles of NE States of India”.
14. Dr. Priyadarsana Dharma Rajan Senior Fellow (Professor), Ashoka Trust for Research in ecology and Environment, Bangalore-560064, for research study on Project titled "Documentation and sustainable management of insect bio-resources of NE India”.
15. Dr. R. Ganesan, Fellow (Associate Professor), Ashoka Trust for Research in ecology and Environment, Bangalore-560064, for research study on Project titled "Quantitative assessment and mapping of plant diversity and biological resources in Western Assam”.

16. Dr. R. Ganesan, Fellow (Associate Professor), Ashoka Trust for Research in ecology and Environment, Bangalore-560064, for research study on Project titled "Integrative Taxonomic Analysis for Assessment of Diversity and Phylogenetic Relationships among Lauraceae family of Northeast Region"
17. Dr. Arvind N. A, Fellow (Associate Professor), Ashoka Trust for Research in ecology and Environment, Bangalore-560064, for research study on Project titled "Quantitative assessment and mapping of the diversity of non-marine molluscs of NE India".
18. Dr. Gitartha Kaushik, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Dept. of Zoology, NE Hill University, Meghalaya, for research study on Project titled "Population structure and Genetic diversity of five torrential fish species from the North East India: Implications for conservation".
19. Ms. Moromita Roy, PhD Research Scholar, Dept. of Zoology, Gauhati University, for research study on Project titled "Study on the diversity and pollination biology of potential insects of Manas National Park, Assam".
20. Dr. Hiren Gogoi, Assistant Professor, Department of Zoology, Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono-Hills, Doimukh-791112, Arunachal Pradesh, India, for research study on Project titled "Bio-resource and sustainable livelihoods in NE India".
21. Dr. Dipanwita Banik, Scientist, Medicinal Aromatic and Economic Plants Divn, CSIR-North East Institute of Science & Technology, Jorhat, Assam, for research study on Project titled, "Investigation of oleochemicals of under-utilized wild nutmegs native to NE India and value addition thereof".
22. The Director, Haffkine Institute for Training, Research and Testing, Acharya Donde Marg, Parel, Mumbai for accessing biological resources to collect snake and snake venom for research purpose.
23. Ms Anuja Mital, Wildlife Biologist, Alamanda, Glendale, Gladys Alvares Road, Thane (W), Maharashtra, for the research study entitled 'Conservation of the Black Softshell Trutle-*Nilssonina nigricans* in Assam'.