

**Minutes of 18th Meeting of Assam State Biodiversity Board held on 25th July, 2016
at Conference Hall of Chief Secretary, C-Block Assam Secretariat, Dispur**

The 18th Meeting of the Assam State Biodiversity Board was presided over by Shri V. K. Pipersenia, IAS, Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam and Chairperson of the Assam State Biodiversity Board. A list the members and invitees present in this meeting is at **Annexure-1**

After welcoming the members and invitees present in the meeting the Chairman requested the Member Secretary of the Board to initiate Agenda-wise discussions. The Agenda-wise proceedings and decisions are as under:

1. The Minutes of the 17th Board Meeting were confirmed.
2. The Board was informed of the actions taken on agenda of previous meeting as below:
 - i. Under the Biodiversity Research Associate Program (BRAP) 52 Fellows have been engaged of which 10 were presently working with the Board.
On this matter the Board decided that:
 - a. More students shall be engaged under BRAP or for Internship by the Board.
 - b. Students from all the fields may be considered.
 - c. All the selected candidates shall be given a familiarizing-training on biodiversity issues. They shall be exposed to functioning of the Board and that of the BMCs.
 - d. The duration of engagement shall be made flexible e.g. form one month to 3 months, so that larger section of students may be sensitized about biodiversity related issues.
 - ii. The following proposals were under consideration the Government:
 - a. Amendment to the Assam Biodiversity Rules-2010.
 - b. Organizational structure and draft Service Regulation of the Board.
 - iii. Documentary "Biodiversity of Assam" was presented to Prince William and Princess Kate Middleton during their visit to Assam in April 2016. The other documentary "Amulya Jaibabaichitra" was being translated into English.
 - iv. Both the documentaries have been distributed to the Managers of Protected Areas and to the BMCs for screening during orientation workshops and capacity building of the EDCs.
 - v. The Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun has initiated preparation of Assam Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (ABSAP).
 - vi. The Protocol developed for Notification of Threatened Taxa was presented to the Board. *The Board suggested that:*
 - a. The process may be initiated as suggested.

- b. *A proposal may be made for captive breeding of threatened species, such as Gecko Lizard.*
- vii. On the assignment of study of wetlands of Assam, discussions were on with North-East Space Application Centre (NESAC), Shillong.
- viii. On the proposal for study of Invasive Alien Species, the No Objection Certificate from the French Development Agency was awaited.

On this issue the board suggested that:

- a. *A detailed project proposal be prepared for tackling problem of invasive species in forests, agricultural fields, fisheries, tea-gardens and orchards. This proposal may be submitted to the Agriculture department for consideration under the Rashtriya Kisan Vikas Yojana(RKVY).*
- b. *Constitute a Working Group comprising of Departments of Forest, Agriculture, Fisheries, Horticulture and Biodiversity Board for developing an integrated-strategy for control and eradication of invasive species in the State.*
- c. *Take up areas Block wise or at landscape level for tackling the problem of invasive species.*
- ix. Regarding coordination of plantation activities in the State a website was developed and demonstrated to the Board. *For improvement of this Website the Board suggested that following features may be added;*
 - a. *Details of all the Nurseries of various departments under all Schemes such as CAMPA, Social Forestry, APFBC of the Forest Department.*
 - b. *Location of Nurseries, available stock, species wise*
 - c. *Facility for private nurseries to Register and post information*
 - d. *Information on suitable species for different soils type /conditions*
 - e. *Planting techniques*
 - f. *Significant plantation activities (e.g. Record plantations done by the Eco-Task Force)*
 - g. *Important / Famous slogans/ quotations regarding plantations / forest-human interface etc.*
 - h. *The Website should be in conformity with the Standard Framework for the State Government websites developed by Website Development Cell of Government of Assam.*

The Board suggested that AMTRON may take up the task of further developing the web-site and submit its requirement to the board.

3. The Board was informed regarding the following:

- i. Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) have been constituted in all the 189 Anchalik Panchayats in the State.
- ii. Four BMCs have been constituted in the Bodoland Autonomous District

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The Board suggested that

- a. *An All Assam Conference of BMCs shall be organized in conjunction with Wildlife Week Celebrations during the first week of October, 2016. At least 5 members from each BMC shall be invited to this Conference.*
 - b. *The Board shall write to P&RD Department for co-hosting the conference*
 - c. *Convenience of Hon'ble Chief Minister be solicited for inaugurating the conference.*
 - d. *Efforts may be made to set up BMCs in the DHAD and KAAC and in the remaining parts of BTAD by the end of August.*
- iii. Drafts of 40 Biodiversity Registers are ready and works were going on in 88 BMCs. Financial assistance and BRAP support would be provided to the remaining BMCs soon.
 - iv. Grant had been sanctioned recently to 9 BMCs including 2 BMCs of Majuli for preparation of their PBRs.
 - v. Technical Support Group (TSGs) have been established in 14 Districts, for the remaining Districts matter would be taken up again through a DO letter from the Chairman.

In this regard the Board suggested that concerned DCs be approached to get the draft PBRs vetted within a fixed time limit.

- vi. Status of projects on the
 - a. Insect Fauna Documentation: Final Report due by 31st July 2016.
 - b. Wild Edible Bio-resources: Book to be published by end August, 2016.
 - c. Fish Diversity: Fourth quarter report received, a mid-term report due by 1st week of August 2016.
- vii. Grants received by the Board:
 - a. From State Government: Rs. 30.00 lakh
 - b. From NBA: Nil
 - c. Interest earned: Rs. 2.26 lakh
- viii. Exposure visit of Board delegation to Sikkim SBB during April 2016.
- ix. Participation by the Board in the Capacity building workshop on trans-boundary movement of Living Modified Organisms at Chennai on 9th May 2016.
- x. Participation by the Board in the Access and Benefit Sharing Workshop at NEDFi house, Guwahati on 22nd June 2016, organized by Biotech Consortium India Limited (BCIL) in collaboration with NBA.

- xi. Shifting of the Board Office from Rehabari, to Aranya Bhawan, Panjabari. In this regard the Chairman approved utilization of grant from the Assam Project on Forest & Biodiversity Conservation.
- xii. Joining of 2 Technical Assistants on contract basis from APFBC grant and one Junior Accountant on absorption basis against a post deployed by Assam Forest Department.
- xiii. Celebration of International Biological Diversity Day on 22nd May 2016 at Nameri National Park, Tezpur on the theme "Mainstreaming Biodiversity, sustaining people and livelihood".
- xiv. Capacity building interaction with Member Secretaries of 35 BMC.
- xv. Three term-deposits of Rs 20.0 lakh each for 90 days have been made by the Board.

4. Matters Ratified / Approved by the Board:

- i. Research permissions granted by the Board to Dr. Narayan Sharma, Assistant Professor, Cotton College State University for research studies on distribution and conservation of *Vatica lanceaeifolia* (Morhal) in Reserve Forests of Upper Brahmaputra Valley, Assam.
- ii. Following expenditure incurred by the Board: in the 1st Quarter of FY 2016-17
 - a. State Grant: Rs. 9,41,964/-
 - b. NBA Grant: Rs. 3,07,561/-
 - c. APFBC Grant: Rs. 27,67,229/-
- iii. Registration of the Board under Employees Provident Fund Organization for the following:
 - a. Opening of CPF account for 3 regular employees of the Board.
 - b. Opening of a new Bank Account for the purpose.
 - c. Preparation of an Employer- Employee agreement for the purpose.
- iv. Proposal for receiving funds from Corporate Groups for plantation works of the Forest Department, Assam, for release as and when required.

5. On the proposal of the BMCs for declaration of Majuli as a Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS), the Board recommended setting up of a Committee headed by Padamshree awardee Shri Jadav Payeng. The composition of the Committee recommended by the Board is at **Annexure-2**. The Board shall provide grant to the Committee commensurate to its mandate.

6. The Board recommended that discussions may be held with the Head of the Zoology Department In-charge of Animal Ecology and Wildlife Biology, Guwahati University, or some other Organization/Institute to develop a *Centre*

for Training on Wildlife Management. The Board may establish a Chair for this Centre and provide necessary financial support.

7. Regarding Celebration of 70th Independence Day on 15th August 2016 the Board noted the proposal and recommended that:

- i. All BMCs shall hoist National Flag at BMC Office or any other premise.
- ii. At least 70 fruit bearing / multi-utility species saplings shall be planted by each BMC. The Board to provide necessary financial support.
- iii. Documentaries prepared by the Board shall be screened during the meetings of the BMCs.


8. The Board noted steps taken for reducing use of paper and minimizing use of plastic materials in day to day work.

9. It was decided to hold next meeting of the Board in September end.

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

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(V. K. Pipersenia)
Chairman-ASBB


27/07/2016
(A.K. Johari)
Member Secy ASBB

Members/ Invitees present in the 18th Meeting of Assam State Biodiversity Board: 25TH July, 2016

Sr.	Name	Designation	Contact No.	E-mail Id
Official Members				
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Ex- Officio Members				
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Special Invitees				
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