

Biodiversity matters Newsletter

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सत्यमेव जयते

सचिव
भारत सरकार
पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय
Secretary
Government of India
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MESSAGE

National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), since its formulation in 2003, has been working as the nodal agency for implementing the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and managing issues related to biodiversity conservation, use of biological resources and associated knowledge occurring in India for commercial or research purposes or for the purposes of bio-survey and bio-utilisation. Several initiatives have also been taken by NBA at the national and international levels, viz. Centre for Biodiversity Policy and Law (CEBPOL), UNEP-GEF-MoEF&CC Project on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) and Indo-German Access and Benefit Sharing Partnership Project. The benefits from the initiatives can be realised only if they reach the stakeholders at large.

I believe that the e-newsletter 'Biodiversity Matters' launched by NBA would serve as the right medium to enhance awareness and capacity building of stakeholders. I congratulate NBA and hope that this endeavour is successful.

Date: 27-03-2017

Place: New Delhi


(A.N. Jha)



Biodiversity matters Newsletter

डा. अमिता प्रसाद
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Message

Recent developments in the area of access of bioresources and their benefit sharing with the custodians of biodiversity have significant implications for all stakeholders making use of Indian biodiversity for research, commercialisation or for securing Intellectual property Rights. Dissemination of relevant information on biodiversity, including on legal and policy measures on Access and Benefit Sharing through different means of mass outreach is therefore desirable. In line with the National Mission on 'Digital India', development of an electronic newsletter 'Biodiversity Matters' by the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) is a commendable initiative. I congratulate the Chairperson and staff of NBA for steering the new initiative and convey my best wishes to them.

(Dr. Amita Prasad)





Biodiversity matters

NEWSLETTER



NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY AUTHORITY, CHENNAI



FROM THE CHAIRPERSON'S DESK



Biological diversity is the resource upon which families, communities, nations and future generations depend. It is the link between all organisms on earth, binding each into an interdependent ecosystem, in which all species have their role. It is the web of life. It is the bounden duty of everyone to protect the biodiversity and do no harm to its existence.

As an answer to the call of the United Nations to take steps for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, India, enacted the landmark legislation, Biological Diversity Act in 2002, which gave birth to the National Biodiversity Authority in 2003.

Carrying the mandate of conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of benefit arising out of the use of the biological resources, the NBA has been doing remarkable service in the field assisted by the State Biodiversity Boards and Biodiversity Management Committees and other stakeholders.

As the tasks before the NBA are increasing day by day, it has become imperative to make the people and those involved in the process aware of its activities. This Newsletter fills the gap and will serve as a medium for continuous interaction with the stakeholders and the SBBs.

The aim of this quarterly Newsletter is to inform the SBBs, BMCs, the stakeholders, sister organisations, and the public at large, about the salient features on the activities carried out by the NBA and the developments/activities on biodiversity that took place around us. It will also give coverage to important events in the SBBs and BMCs. I hope that the awareness generated by such measures will go a long way in accomplishing the tasks before the NBA and implementing the provisions of the Biological Diversity Act.

B. Meenakumari
Chairperson

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About The Biological Diversity Act

The Genesis

The most unique feature of Earth is the existence of life, and the most extraordinary feature of life is its diversity. Approximately 9 million types of plants, animals and fungi inhabit the Earth along with 7 billion people. In 1992, at the first Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the vast majority of the world's nations declared that human actions were dismantling the Earth's ecosystems, eliminating genes, species and biological traits at an alarming rate.

Increasing concerns about dwindling biological resources led to the establishment and adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 1992. This international convention for the first time recognised sovereign rights of the nations over their biological resources and emphasized that access to genetic resources should be only for environmentally sound purposes and should be subject to national legislations. India is one of the mega biodiversity countries and is also the signatory to the CBD.

In India, measures for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity did not start with the CBD. India has a long history of conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Environment protection is enshrined in our constitution [Articles 48 A and 51 A (g)]. Over a period of time, a stable organisational structure has been developed for protection of the environment. Numerous wide-ranging policies, programmes and projects are in place, serving to protect, conserve and regulate sustainable use of the biological resources of the country.

The Biological Diversity Act 2002 was enacted to adopt the objectives enshrined in the United Nation's Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) was established in 2003 to implement India's Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

The Biological Diversity Act, 2002 - In a Nutshell

- To regulate access to biological resources (BR) of the country with the purpose of securing equitable share in benefits arising out of the use of BRs and associated knowledge relating to BRs;
- To conserve and sustainably use the biological diversity;
- To respect and protect knowledge of local communities related to biodiversity;
- To secure fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of biological resources, associated knowledge relating to biological resources and share the benefits with local communities who are conservers of biological resources or holders of knowledge;
- Conservation and development of areas of importance from the standpoint of biological diversity by declaring them as Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS);
- Protection and rehabilitation of threatened species;
- Involvement of institutions of State Governments in the broad scheme of the implementation of the Biological Diversity Act through constitution of Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs);
- Measures to conserve and sustainable use of biological resources, including habitat and species protection, environmental impact assessments (EIAs) of projects, integration of biodiversity into the plans, programmes, and policies of various departments/sectors;
- Provisions for local communities to have a say in the use of their resources and knowledge, and to charge fees for this;
- Setting up of National, State and Local Biodiversity Funds to support conservation, and benefit sharing (BS)





About NBA

through a structure that comprises of Authority, Secretariat, State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) at the state level, Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) at local level and various expert committees.

- The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) was established in 2003 to implement India's Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and has its headquarters in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The NBA is a statutory and autonomous body that performs facilitative, regulatory and advisory functions on issues of biodiversity. The NBA delivers its mandates

- The main functions of the NBA include the following:

- ❖ Advise the Government of India on matters relating to conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of utilization of BRs.
- ❖ Regulate activities and issue guidelines for access to

biological resources and for fair and equitable sharing in accordance with Sections 3, 4 and 6 of the Biological Diversity Act 2002.

- ❖ Take necessary measures to oppose the grant of intellectual property rights in any country outside India on any BR obtained from India or knowledge associated with such BR derived from India illegally.
- ❖ Advise the State Governments in selection of areas of biodiversity importance to be notified as heritage sites and suggest measures for their management.
- ❖ Along with SBBs provide guidance and technical support to BMCs for documenting People's Biodiversity Registers.

Milestones

- The NBA has processed over 1500 applications forms submitted by the users of biological resources and associated traditional knowledge.
- About 900 applications have been cleared by the Authority, out of which, over 400 approvals were transformed into ABS agreements on Mutually Agreed Terms (MAT).
- An amount of Rs. 36 crores of Benefit Sharing has been realised from the ABS agreements and the NBA is in the process of disbursing this amount to the local community or Benefit Claimers from where the biological resources were accessed.
- All 29 states in India have established the State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs), and 23 states have framed State Biological Diversity Rules.
- Sixteen States and two Union Territories have notified a list of species which are on the verge of extinction or likely become extinct in the near future as a threatened species under the Section 38 of the Biological Diversity Act 2002.
- Fifteen institutions have been designated as national repositories to receive and store voucher specimen and new taxon identified by the researchers.



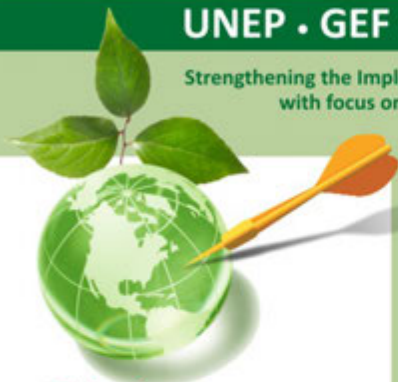
- Facilitated the constitution of 4180 BMCs at the local level in 27 States.
- The NBA provided financial assistance of Rs. 1.6 crores for the documentation of People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs) during the year 2015-2016. A total of 2889 PBRs have been documented.
- Seven locations of biodiversity importance have been declared as Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHSs).

The NBA serves as the launch pad for several international projects and initiatives on biodiversity policy implementation and governance like, UNDAF, UNEP-GEF, CEPOL, ASEAN and GIZ.



UNEP • GEF • MoEF & CC ABS PROJECT

Strengthening the Implementation of the Biological Diversity Act and Rules
with focus on its Access and Benefit Sharing Provisions



Objective

The Objective of the UNEP - GEF - MoEF&CC Project on ABS is to increase the institutional, individual and systemic capacities of stakeholders to effectively implement the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and the Rules 2004 to achieve biodiversity conservation through implementing Access and Benefit Sharing Agreements in India.

Implementing Agency and Partners

The project is currently being implemented in the ten provincial states of India namely Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Odisha, Sikkim, Telangana, Tripura and West Bengal.

NBA executes the project in collaboration with ten State Biodiversity Boards, Botanical Survey of India (BSI), Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme - Division of Environmental Law and Conventions (UNEP/DELCO), United Nations University - Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) and Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Project Components

- Identification of biodiversity with potential for ABS and their valuation in selected ecosystems such as forest, agriculture and wetlands.
- Development of tools, methodologies, guidelines, frameworks for implementing ABS provisions of the Biological Diversity Act.
- Piloting agreements on ABS
- Implementation of policy and regulatory frameworks relating to ABS provisions at national level and thereby contribute to international ABS policy issues.
- Capacity building for strengthening implementation of the ABS provisions of the BD Act.
- Increase public awareness and education programmes.

The project has facilitated the constitution of 314 BMCs, 258 Local Biodiversity Funds (LBFs) and 77 PBRs spread across ten states.

The project has been instrumental in strengthening the implementation of the ABS provisions in the States and has received over 300 access applications and signed over 100 ABS agreements with the Indian companies/entities and accrued an amount of 30.60 Million Indian Rupees in the statutory State Biodiversity Funds.

The project states have undertaken the task of empowering BMCs to levy fee under the provisions of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and Rules 2004. It has also strengthened the capacities of various niche stakeholders in documentation of tradable bio-resources, valuation of bio-resources in agriculture, forests, and wetland ecosystems, documentation of traditional knowledge, improving the knowledge base of BMCs, and their roles and responsibilities in implementation of the Act and its provisions, institutional management, aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and enhancing the knowledge base in legal systems at the State level.





Norwegian Embassy



Centre for Biodiversity Policy and Law (CEBPOL)

Government of India in collaboration with the Norwegian Government has established "Centre for Biodiversity Policy and Law (CEBPOL)" at the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), Chennai, an autonomous and statutory body of the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) towards strengthening of expertise in Biodiversity Policy and Law in India. This programme is executed by the NBA in collaboration with Norwegian Environment Agency through the Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi, India.

The vision of the Centre is to establish a 'Centre of Excellence' focusing on biodiversity law and policy that caters to the needs of national and international rule making and subsequent implementation on issues of biodiversity. The Centre aims to provide advice and support to the Government of India and Norway on Biodiversity Policy and Law related issues including complex negotiations on Access and Benefit Sharing and Traditional knowledge as well as governance issues relating to biodiversity at the National and International level. The Centre proposes to help NBA in the effective implementation of International agreements on conservation, sustainable use and the associated access and benefit sharing components of it. In addition, CEBPOL aims to contribute to the effective implementation of the Biological Diversity Act 2002 and Rules 2004.

CEBPOL works on identified thematic areas viz., Access and Benefit Sharing, Mainstreaming of Biodiversity, Invasive Alien Species, Interface with other Multilateral Agreements/Organisations, Nature Index and training, capacity building & human resources development. The

thematic activities are carried out by fellows and consultants of the center severally and jointly with experts and institutions of national and international repute. The center also supports NBA on various implementational, interpretational and operational issues related to the Biological Diversity Act.

The following activities were carried out under this program:

- A workshop on "the development of a pilot study on the Nature Index in India" was organized on 28-29 January, 2016 at Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- The CEBPOL team also attended the eighth Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity held from May 31-03 June, 2016 at Trondheim, Norway.
- Awareness workshops on ABS guidelines conducted jointly with Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and organized by Biotech Consortium India Limited (BCIL) at 6 locations in India was held from June-July 2016.
- A two day workshop on Synergies among Biodiversity related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) was organised during 03-04 October, 2016 at Manesar, Haryana.
- A Consultative Conference for State Biodiversity Boards on the challenges and prospects of biodiversity governance in India was held during 25-26 October, 2016 in Bangalore.
- A Policy Dialogue on Mainstreaming Biodiversity into the Fisheries Sector was organised on 25 November, 2016 at NBA, Chennai.



Workshop on Nature Index, 28th-29th Jan, 2016 at Hotel The New Marriot, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.



Synergies among Biodiversity related Multilateral Environmental Agreements - 3rd - 4th October, 2016 at Heritage Village Resort, Manesar, Gurgaon, Haryana.

About the Indo-German Access and Benefit Sharing Partnership Project



In picture (Left to right): Mr. T. Rabikumar, Secretary, NBA addressing the gathering, Dr. B. Meenakumari, Chairperson, NBA, Dr. Amita Prasad, Additional Secretary, MoEFACC and Mr. Edgar Endrukaitis, Director, Indo-German Biodiversity Programme, GIZ (on the dais).

The "Access and Benefit Sharing Partnership Project" is one of the projects under the GIZ's Indo-German Biodiversity Programme. It is commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The ABS Partnership Project aims at strengthening the capacities of the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs), Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), as well as commercial users of

biological resources for the effective implementation of ABS mechanisms in India.

The project being implemented by the Indian Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and at the national level - the NBA, while at the state level by the State Biodiversity Boards of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Uttarakhand.

Intervention Areas:

The project will strategically focus on following objectives:

- Awareness raising, communication and stakeholder dialogues for creating better understanding of the Biological Diversity Act 2002 (BDA), ABS Guidelines and Nagoya Protocol on ABS amongst different actors and stakeholder groups
- Development of good practices of benefit sharing with communities, based on utilization of biological resources for commercial and/or research purposes
- Development of an ABS monitoring system for NBA and SBBs.

ABS Knowledge and Experience Sharing Workshop

A two-day workshop was held on 28-29th of June 2016 marked the initiation for the implementation of the ABS Partnership Project in Chennai. It brought together 35 representatives from NBA, SBBs, the Indo-German Biodiversity Programme, and senior officials from MoEFCC.

During the two days, representatives from 13 SBBs exchanged knowledge and experiences in implementing ABS provisions in their respective states. They also highlighted their achievements, lessons learnt, ABS good

practices and the challenges faced. Dr. Amita Prasad, Additional Secretary, MoEFCC and Dr. B Meenakumari, Chairperson, NBA were the guests of honour at the workshop. Mr. T. Rabikumar, Secretary, NBA and Mr. Edgar Endrukaitis, GIZ Indo-German Biodiversity Program Director were dignitaries at the dais. Dr. Hartmut Meyer, GIZ, Global Project ABS Capacity Development Initiative, moderated the technical sessions in the workshop.

The project will be implemented for a period of four years from May 2016 to April 2020.



BIODIVERSITY FINANCE INITIATIVE (BIOFIN) UNDER THE GOI-UNDP

'STRENGTHENING NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT'

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is piloting a new global initiative, Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) in 30 countries. BIOFIN is a global partnership that seeks to address the biodiversity finance challenge in a comprehensive manner. This initiative was established in the wake of 11th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD. BIOFIN aims to provide a set of tools and methodological framework for measuring expenditure on biodiversity, which the countries may choose to use in their efforts to mobilize resources required for achieving the global and national biodiversity targets.

In response to an invitation from UNDP, the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has communicated its willingness to participate in the BIOFIN in India. The initiative was officially launched on the International Day of Biological Diversity, 22nd May, 2015 at Srinagar. BIOFIN implementation in India is a completely country-driven process, taking into account the activities already undertaken by India for development of national biodiversity targets and for assessing funding for biodiversity in the country.

BIOFIN in India is led by the MoEF&CC. The initiative is hosted by the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) working with the State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) of Uttarakhand and Maharashtra. Technical assistance is provided by Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP). UNDP India manages the programme under the guidance of MoEF&CC. A Steering Committee with representatives from relevant ministries oversees the programme and a Technical Advisory Group provide technical guidance.

Project budget: UNDP has allocated 10,00,000 USD for piloting BIOFIN initiative in India.

Project duration: 2015-2018

BIOFIN in India follows a seven-step process:

- i. Nationally driven appraisal of government's schemes and programmes to understand their impact on biodiversity;
- ii. Assessment of public expenditure at the central and state level for biodiversity conservation;
- iii. Assessment of expenditure/investments by businesses, donors and civil society organisations for biodiversity conservation;
- iv. Finance Needs Assessment for the implementation of National Biodiversity Action Plan and State Biodiversity Action Plans of two pilot states;
- v. Identify and test innovative financial instruments and tools for biodiversity finance;
- vi. Develop a biodiversity finance strategy and plan;
- vii. Develop a framework for tracking, monitoring and reporting the progress on National Biodiversity Targets (NBTs).

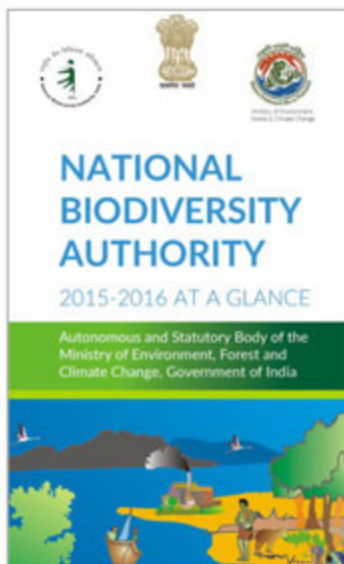
Key activities undertaken include;

The BIOFIN India partners had participated in various regional and global meetings as given below;

- I. 2-4 March 2016- BIOFIN Regional Workshop for Europe, Asia and the Pacific, Bali, Indonesia
- II. 12-14 April 2016- 2nd Global Workshop, Los Cabos, Mexico
- III. 24-29 July 2016- Global BIOFIN Mission to India
- IV. 26-30 September 2016- BIOFIN Methodology Testing Workshop, Bangkok, Thailand
- V. 5-7 October 2016, 2nd BIOFIN Regional Workshop for Africa Livingstone, Zambia
- VI. 29 November-2 December 2016, BIOFIN Project Associates Workshop, Colombo, Sri Lanka

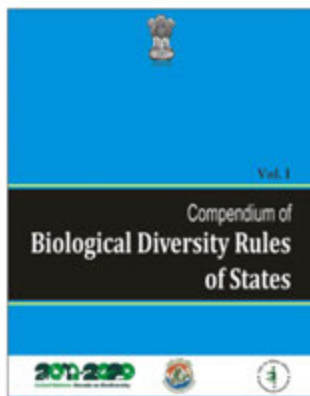
Activities envisaged under the BIOFIN Initiative are being undertaken for its effective implementation.

Publications



Information Brochure

A brochure was released by the NBA during the Tenth State Biodiversity Boards meeting held on 25-26th August 2015 at New Delhi. The Brochure briefly outlines the NBA's activities and achievements during the year 2014-15 and provides overview on the genesis of the BD Act and ABS Regulations.



Compendium

The second edition of "Compendium of the Biological Diversity Act 2002, Rules 2004 and Notifications" was released during the Tenth State Biodiversity Boards meeting. This contains latest and updated information on biodiversity legislation in India.

The book of Compendium consists of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, Biological Diversity Rules, 2004, and various notifications issued by the Ministry and NBA on biodiversity and its management in the country. This will help in putting into practice the principles of Nagoya Protocol on benefit Sharing and will serve as a guiding tool to the SBBs, BMCs, and other stakeholders particularly to who apply to access India's biological resources or associated knowledge for purposes such as research, bio-survey, bio-utilization, and commercial utilization.

Future Activities

Online application process: NBA in collaboration with the National Informatics Centre, New Delhi is in the process of developing state-of-the art software for online processing of access applications to enable in meeting the timeline prescribed in the BD Act.

Guidelines for utilization of funds derived from the sale of Red Sanders wood: An Expert Committee is currently developing the guidelines for utilization of funds derived from the sale of Red Sanders wood. Guidelines for utilising the funds: The NBA is in the process of bringing out guidelines for classification and utilisation of funds generated by it, funds granted by the Ministry and received from other sources. A detailed handbook outlining the procedures involved in maintaining the NBA and National Biodiversity Fund accounts will soon be brought out.

Notification on threatened species in the states: Thirteen States are yet to notify the list of threatened species under Section 38 of the Biological Diversity Act 2002, and efforts will be made to notify this at the earliest.

Representative agency in the Union Territories (UTs) of India: While each state is represented by the SBB to carry out the activities related to application process and other issues, the UTs do not have any mechanism, and they fall under the direct purview of NBA. To obviate this, a process of identifying suitable representative agency in the UTs is underway.

Training module: An Expert Committee at NBA has developed a training module for the staff of NBA, SBBs and functionaries of BMCs including other target groups like industry, educational institutes, etc. This will serve as resource material for capacity building and refresher training.



Upcoming Events

Event	Organized by	Date	Website
NATIONAL			
Policy dialogue on Mainstreaming biodiversity into the agricultural Sector	Centre for Biodiversity Policy and Law (CEBPOL)- National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)	January 20, 2017 New Delhi	-
Debriefing Meeting on Sharing the Outcome from CoP-13 And CoP-MoP 2, Cancun, Mexico And Planning Follow Up Activities	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India	January 30, 2017 New Delhi	-
National Biodiversity Authority observes World Wetland day 2017 - 1. A radio-outreach and awareness generation campaign on wetlands, their role in disaster management, and ways and means to protect them. 2. A school outreach and awareness raising exercise	National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) supported by CEBPOL	1. February 1 - March 2, 2017 Chennai, New Delhi, Kolkatta, Ahmedabad & Thiruvananthapuram 2. February 2, 2017 Chennai	
3rd National Biodiversity Congress (NBC) 2017	Kerala State Biodiversity Board	February 22-26, 2017 Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala	www.nbc-india.com
Experience sharing workshop on Access and Benefit sharing and Invasive Alien Species	Centre for Biodiversity Policy and Law (CEBPOL) - National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)	March 08 - 11, 2017 Chennai	-
INTERNATIONAL			
ICB 2017 : 19th International Conference on Biodiversity	World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology	February 23 - 24, 2017 Paris, France	https://www.waset.org/conference/2017/02/paris/ICB



NBA invites articles, photographs with brief write-up on biodiversity and related aspects for publication.

Please write to: The Secretary, National Biodiversity Authority, 5th Floor TICEL Biopark, CSIR Road, Taramani Chennai- 600 013 or to cbcebpol@nbaindia.org or support@nbaindia.org

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