

National level consultation on

“Agro-biodiversity hot-spots and Biodiversity heritage sites”

**Organized by the PPV&FRA, New Delhi and the BDA, Chennai at the North Eastern Hill University, Shillong, Meghalaya.
1-2 June 2007**

The PPV&FR Rule 70 (2) deals with the Gene Fund and rewarding farmers, community of farmers, particularly tribal and rural communities engaged in conservation, improvement and preservation of genetic resources of economic plants and their wild relatives, particularly in areas identified as agro-biodiversity hot spots. Therefore it is necessary to debate and further clarify what are the agrobio-diversity hot spots where economic plants and their wild relatives occur in abundance leading to their conservation by communities.

A common perception needs to be arrived on what is meant by agro biodiversity in the PPV&FR Act, 2001. The rule clearly mentions of economic plants and their wild relatives, there by meaning crops that the Agro biodiversity is to be seen from the point of view of plants that originated and evolved in this part of the world. Also these must be the area where farmers and communities have conserved, improved and preserved these valuable agrio biodiversity.

The agro climatic Atlas, the soil survey maps, plant distribution maps cropping pattern maps and socio economic Atlas are to be examined converged to identify the agro biodiversity hot spots.

Section 37 of Biodiversity Act, 2002 deals with “Biodiversity Heritage” sites. The State Government in consultation with local bodies is notifying areas of biodiversity importance as biodiversity heritage sites. State Government in

consultation with the Central Government may frame rules for the management and conservation of all heritage sites.

The issues are:

1. Where are the biodiversity "Heritage Sites" mentioned in the BDA, 2002?
2. Are these sites different from the centers where agro biodiversity exists?
3. In section 41 of the BDA, preservation of habitats and conservation of land races, folk variety and cultivars are covered. Are the Heritage sites dense with such material?
4. The PPV&FR Rule 70 also deals with conservation of genetic resources of economic plants and their wild relatives in agro-biodiversity hot spots.
5. What is the extent of blue water or the level of separation between the "Heritage Sites" and the "Agro biodiversity hot spots".
6. If there is certain degree of overlap it can be identified and separated out so that there is no duplication of efforts.
7. The ago-biodiversity hot spots can then be delineated using climatic, soil and vegetation maps?

To address this, a round table discussion is proposed at the NEH University, Shillong with ecologists, botanists, germplasm experts, natural resources scientists, and lawyers. This will also enable the Authority to go to the Biodiversity rich tract to see for themselves while drawing an action plan. This meeting will bring clarity on the issue of agro biodiversity and its relevance to plant breeding and variety development.

Friday, 1 June 2007, NEHU, Shillong, Meghalaya

09.00 – 10.00 Welcome and background briefing.

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|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Importance of Diversity | Prof. P.Tandon, VC, NEHU |
| Access to Benefit sharing | Prof. S. Kannaiyan, Chairman, NBA |
| The Gene Fund | Dr. S. Nagarajan Chairperson, PPV&FRA |

Agenda I

How to define and identify biodiversity?

10.00 to 11.30

- Panel of discussions:** Moderator: Dr. P.S. Ramakrishnan, JNU
Co-Moderator: Dr. D.K. Bagchi, VC
Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyalaya
West Bengal

(Brief presentation by each on the various issues flagged)

Panel: Dr. J. L. Karihaloo, Coordinator, APCoAB, Dr. S.S. Rao, ADR, O/o Directorate of Research, IGKV, Raipur, Prof. B.K. Tiwari, NEHU, Dr. K.N. Nair, NBRI.

Issues:

- What are biodiversity dense areas?
- The various agroclimatic zones
- Do soil map of India help in agro biodiversity zoning?
- Flora distribution pattern
- Diversity spots of agriculturally important crops.

10 minutes presentation each on the various zones as per them.

Tea Break

11.45 to 12.15

Agenda II (Panel Discussions)

Biodiversity, Cultivar, folk variety and land races

Moderator: Dr. M. Mahadevappa
(Brief presentation by each on defining these issues)

12.15-13.30

Ms. Geetha Rani, MSSRF, Dr. Shobha Rani, Pr. Scientist & Head, Crop Improvement Section, DRR, Dr. K. Rathinavel, Sr. Scientist, CICR, Dr. H.H. Ram, Krishidhan Seeds Ltd., Prof. B.L. Thawnre, Dr. B.S. Konkan Krishi Vidyapeth, Dapoli, Dr. R.C. Sharma, PAU.

Issues:

- Cultivar - what does that mean?
- Folk Variety explanation by an NGO involved in this exercise.
- Land races – are they heterogenous farmer's material?
- Is it more with crops that evolved in the area compared to introduce crops?

Discussion and convergence of views

Lunch 13.30-14.30

Agenda III Agro- Biodiversity hot spots and farmer's contribution

(Group discussion)

14.30 to 16.30

Moderators:

Dr. S. Nagarajan followed by open house discussion
Dr. M. Ganesan, TNAU, Prof. S.K. Barik,
Dr. P.K. Pathak, AAU, Dr. S. Bhargav, Bikaner
Dr. J.L. Karihaloo, Coordinator, APCoAB,
New Delhi

Issues:

- What is agro biodiversity – genetic resources of economic plants and their wild relatives? Does it cover land races, folk variety, etc?
- The Agro biodiversity hot spots in India.
- The tribal and rural community dense sites in India.
- Crop species that evolved here and the extent of species and genetic variation.

Discussion and convergence of views

2 June 2007

Agenda IV Agro biodiversity hot spots and farmers' contribution
(Group Discussion) Moderator: Prof. P.S. Ramakrishnan, JNU

09.00 to 11.00

(10 minutes each)

Dr. Wani, Sher-E-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences & Technology of Kashmir, Srinagar, Dr. P.K. Chandrakar, Sr. Scientist, I/c, NSP, IGKV, Dr. M.N. Prem Chandaran, SBI, Coimbatore, Dr. (Mrs.) Alice K. Vari, Pr. Scientist, SST, IARI; CIMAP

Issues:

- Do these agro biodiversity hot spots cover medicinal, aromatic plants, horticultural crops and trees also?
- How to identify the farmers and community who sustain it?
- Recognition is first needed. How reward should it be structured?
- Rating and verifying the best for reward.

Discussion and convergence of views.

11.00 to 12.00

Wrap up session Bench

Prof. P. Tandon, Prof. S. Kannaiyan, Dr. S. Nagarajan

Common discussion, convergence of views and document the agreed perceptions. Drafting the recommendation.

PPV&FRA Dy. Registrar Vote of Thanks

14.00 Lunch and departure.

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