



Biodiversity Management Committees – Simply Explained

Characters:

1. Villager: 20-25 yrs. Male.
2. Company Representative (CR): 30-35 yrs. Male.
3. BMC Chairman Girdhar: 50-55 yrs. Male. Dhoti/Shirt/Shawl/Turban.
4. Urmila: 30-35 yrs. Female.
5. Assistant of CR: 25-30 yrs. Male.

Name of characters to be changed based on the language and state.

Notes:

1. In Hindi and English versions, general mention of State Biodiversity Board will be used. In Marathi translation, Maharashtra Biodiversity Board and in Tamil version, Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board will be mentioned, respectively.
2. Names and some of the terms like Uncle will change in translation to suit the vernacular language.

In a village set in rural India, one morning, the scene opens to villagers going about their daily business. A farmer is seen heading off into the fields on a bullock cart with some hay, a mother walks her children to school, two old ladies are seen talking while sieving some grain, while in the next house, a woman is seen milking a cow, etc. In the local tea shop [TEA SHOP], a young man is seen with the day's newspaper talking to a few friends.

As he gets up to leave, a van [BACK CLOSED/TRANSPORT TYPE/DELIVERY VAN] stops next to the tea shop with a well-dressed man in the front seat and his assistant next to him. [VAN – IMAGINARY GENERIC LOGO AND COMPANY NAME – E.g. Herbal Medicines Company, etc].

Glass containers are empty. Some snacks may be added in it.

The well-dressed man is the company representative [CR] who has arrived to collect some raw material from the forests in the village. He and his assistant get down from the van and walk into the tea shop.

On seeing the young men, they walk up to them.

Assistant to CR: Hello. Can you tell me where the forest department office is?

Villager: Of course [POINTS TO THE RIGHT INTO THE MAIN VILLAGE ROAD]. Please, come with me.



They start walking down the main village road. As they walk, they pass many people going about their work, cows along the road, children entering a school. They walk past a grocery store, a barber, a school, a primary health centre, etc.

Villager: What brings you to our village?

CR: We work for a company that uses medicinal plants to prepare products. We thought of meeting the Forest Department officials once before collecting the plants.

Villager: Have you also obtained permission from the National Biodiversity Authority or State Biodiversity Board? That's required under the Biological Diversity Act.

Assistant to CR: I thought the permit from the Forest Department is enough for companies like ours. We don't fall under the Biological Diversity Act, do we?

The villager looks slightly worried. At this point, they are still a little away from the Forest Department office building. The building can be seen in the distance.

Villager: Let's have your doubts cleared at the BMC. That's short for Biodiversity Management Committee. In fact, the BMC is meeting today.

At this point, they are almost at the Forest Department office. Two buildings are shown [FOREST DEPARTMENT OFFICE] and [PANCHAYAT OFFICE].

CR: Err, BMC? How will the BMC be able to help us?

Villager: BMC manages biodiversity at the local level. They will have answers to all your questions.

CR: Hmm, I see. Okay.

They stop in front of the two buildings. The CR looks between the two buildings.

Villager: Please come...

They walk into the building [PANCHAYAT OFFICE]. At the end of the corridor, is a door labelled [BMC]. On entering the room, a group of seven people [25-60 YRS] are seen working and discussing in smaller groups. [CLEAR DEPICTION OF 4 MEN AND 3 WOMEN].

The villager indicates to an elderly man and introduces him to the CR.

Villager: Girdhar uncle, the chairperson of the BMC, is a respected horticulturist. (to Girdhar uncle) These gentlemen aren't sure about whether the Biodiversity Act affects their company.

Girdhar invites the CR and his assistant into the office.

CR: I am unfamiliar with the functioning of your committee and the Act.

Girdhar indicates to a poster which depicts the Objectives of the Biological Diversity Act. The video then focuses on the relevant posters/charts bringing it to centre.



Girdhar: Sir, let me explain: The Act is being implemented through the National Biodiversity Authority at the national level, State Biodiversity Board at state level, and Biodiversity Management Committee at the local level. [CHART ON NBA, SBB, BMC – THREE TIERS]. Its main objectives include:

[CHART SHOWING THE THREE OBJECTIVES – [To be read by VO artist]

1. Conservation of Biological Diversity
2. Sustainable Use of Its Components
3. Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from the Use of Biological Resources

Assistant to CR: How many members does each BMC have?

As he begins to explain, the scene first highlights the three women members. It then shows little blurbs/clouds/boxes over the heads of the members; their diversity backgrounds such as animal farmer, botanist, agriculturist, fisher-folk, herbalist, TK holder and horticulturist. [Girdhar should be depicted as the horticulturist]

Girdhar: Every BMC has seven members, with the third of the members being women and 18% belonging to the Scheduled Castes or Tribes. All our members are from different backgrounds and are on the voter list of this area.

Everyone in the room smiles and nods.

CR: What exactly do you do here?

Girdhar: We work with other BMCs and State Biodiversity Board to conserve and ensure sustainable use of biological resources and Traditional Knowledge in this area.

Now, Girdhar takes the CR to one of the women in the room. She is working on a register with two other members. The register reads People's Biodiversity Register.

Girdhar: One of our roles is to record the People's Biodiversity Register, in short, we call it PBR. Urmila here, can tell you more.

She shows the People's Biodiversity Register. It first highlights the letters 'P', 'B', and 'R' to indicate the abbreviation. On opening it, a list of the details documented in the PBR appears one by one with a tick box next to it. In the background, Urmila speaks. A computer may be shown on her table to show that PBR is being recorded in a database.

Urmila: For the People's Biodiversity Register, we collect detailed information on local bio-resources. For example, their availability, their medicinal value and any other Traditional Knowledge associated with them.

Girdhar: Yes. We also keep record of availability of bio-resources in PBR. National Biodiversity Authority and State Biodiversity Boards consult us on applications that companies like yours have submitted to them. Based on the availability of the



resource, we decide whether or not, we can give permission for collection. We may also lay down certain conditions and charge a collection fee for bio-resources collected from our region. Of course, there are certain bio-resources are exempted from this. You need to check the exemption list on the National Biodiversity Authority or State Biodiversity Board's website for more information.

When Girdhar speaks, the chart on access procedure may be brought to the front or the side.

CR: Thank You. I will do that. But what benefit does this process provide for your people?

Girdhar: As you know sir, our lives and lifestyles are intimately tied with the nature around us, it is only fair that we receive parts of the benefits for letting others use our resources and associated knowledge.

Girdhar: Let me show you. <members move out of BMC – pan to school building and seed bank next to each other>

Girdhar: We constructed those with the benefits from a company that commercialized a medicinal plant that we traditionally used to cure dengue. That was our previous Access and Benefit Sharing or ABS agreement. In return for accessing the plant, we received certain benefits.

CR: Very well, thank you for all the information. I will come back to you once I have consulted with my superiors and we are prepared to begin the application process. I will now go see the Forest Department to check what additional requirements they might have for our company. Once again, thank you very much, sir.

The CR folds his hands in Namaste. The CR and his assistant leave.

Villager: So, uncle, is the forest alone a part of our biological diversity?

Girdhar: No, my dear boy, biodiversity also includes plants, animals, microorganisms and all other living organisms that are everywhere around us.

Show view of the village – forest in the background and man taking his herd of goat towards the forest for grazing.

Villager: But do you think simply regulating the use of biological resources and maintaining a record in our register is enough?

Urmila: Once we have the record, we will know which species are collected, which are in danger, and how we can do our best to conserve and sustainably use them.

The PBR list documented is brought forth and certain items are highlighted in red. The list will be indicated by tick boxes, some of which will be red to indicate endangered species, etc.

Girdhar: All of this is captured in the Biological Diversity Act to prohibit unauthorized exploitation of our resources. Further, the Act ensures that biodiversity is conserved



and can be used for people's livelihoods and well-being. This way, our children can use it for many years to come.

Show children playing around the herd of goats.

Villager: This is a great initiative by the Government. Thank you for sparing your precious time to enrich my knowledge.

The music has some background voice. It should be removed.

The scene zooms out to the top of the forest and the following text appears: