NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY AUTHORITY

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 64th AUTHORITY MEETING

10th March 2022

Venue

National Biodiversity Authority

Chennai

Proceedings of the 64th Authority Meeting of the National Biodiversity Authority, held on 10th March, 2022

The 64th Authority meeting of the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) was held on 10th March, 2022 at the National Biodiversity Authority, Chennai under the Chairmanship of Dr. V.B. Mathur, Chairman, National Biodiversity Authority. The meeting was held in a hybrid mode. The list of participants is placed as **Annexure-I.**

2. At the outset Dr. V.B. Mathur, Chairperson, NBA welcomed all the Authority members participating in the meeting through both the offline and online modes.

3. Shri. J. Justin Mohan, Secretary, NBA presented the agenda items through a power point presentation as detailed below:-

64.01 Confirmation of the Proceedings of the 63rd Authority meeting

The Draft Proceedings of the 63rd Authority meeting of the National Biodiversity Authority held on 29th November, 2021 at MoEF&CC were circulated to the members *vide* e-mail dated 17th December 2021 for seeking their comments. The comments received from Prof. Tanuja Nesari, NMPB wereincorporated accordingly and were confirmed by the Authority members.

Decision: The members confirmed the Proceedings of the 63rd Authority meeting.

Action: NIL

64.02 Action Taken Report of the 63rd Authority Meetings

The Secretary, NBA informed the members about the action taken on the decisions at the 63rd Authority meeting.

2. Secretary informed that based on discussions with Ministry, it has been decided to extend the tenure of the Expert Committee on Digital Sequence Information (DSI). Dr. S.Kerketta, Advisor, MoEF&CC informed that as the BD Act is in the process of amendment, the tenure of the Expert Committee can be extended and experts can be co-opted to the Committee with the permission of the Chairperson of NBA. Dr. Unnat Pandit suggested that the members who are co-opted can be eminent scientists from DBT, DST and legal experts in the field of IPR.

3. With respect to Agenda No. 63.05, Secretary, NBA informed that the Annual Report for

FY 2020-21 has been submitted to MoEF&CC. Dr. Kerketta, Advisor, MoEF&CC mentioned that the Annual Report will be placed in the Parliament during the next session.

4. With respect to Agenda No. 63.08 pertaining to Non-Disclosure agreement between CSIR-TKDL and NBA, Shri. Achalender Reddy said that NBA is a higher body which regulates access to biological resources and associated knowledge and therefore CSIR-TKDL shall be asked to provide the required information to NBA. . He opined that a non-Disclosure agreement cannot be signed as this may have repercussions. Chairman, NBA mentioned that this agreement is a continuation of what has already been done. Shri. Achalender Reddy informed that the decision taken earlier can be reviewed by the Authority, if required. Feasibility of executing an MoU with CSIR-TKDL may also be explored.

5. With respect to Agenda No. 63.08 (b), Dr. Unnat Pandit said that the decision taken for the preparation of e-PBR and its importance can be included in the curriculum of the National Education Policy. Further he suggested that NBA may contact NCERT which is the nodal agency that develops the curriculum framework to include a comprehensive topic on biodiversity conservation. Secretary, NBA informed that the NCERT textbooks already have a chapter on biodiversity conservation and NCERT may be requested to update the same. Shri. Chaitra informed that a Committee has been formed by the Ministry of Education to develop the National Curriculum Framework which has invited suggestions and NBA can also provide the required suggestions to be included in the curriculum for school students. Members suggested that NBA can provide details like the history of biodiversity conservation, PBRs etc to the Committee. Chairman, NBA explained about the inputs given by NBA to the Ministry of Education have been uploaded onthe DIKSHA portal. He suggested that this also can be taken by the committee while developing the curriculum. He further informed that NBA would communicate to NCERT about additional information which can be included in the curriculum for students.

6. Dr. Kerketta, Advisor, MoEF&CC informed the members that the request of the NBA on paying sitting fees for the Authority members as discussed in Agenda No. 63.01, has been processed by the Ministry and would be communicated soon to NBA.

Decision: a. The members decided that Chairman, NBA can co-opt members who are eminent scientists from DBT, DST and legal experts in the field of IPR to be part of the existing Expert Committee.

b. NBA to inform the Committee that has been constituted to develop the National Curriculum

Framework by the Ministry of Education to include additional information on biodiversity conservation while formulating the new curriculum and to use the inputs on biodiversity available in the DIKSHA Portal, which has been prepared by NBA.

c. Members noted the action taken on the decisions taken during the 63rd Authority meeting.

Action: NIL

64.03: ABS applications dealt by the Secretariat

Based on the EC report, Authority in its 54th and 55th meeting vide agenda no. 54.20.03, endorsed the recommendation that NBA Secretariat may deal the applications based on the set precedence. Accordingly, NBA vide OM dated 19th March 2020 issued an order for processing ABS application in NBA without referring to Expert Committee on ABS. However, in case of any contravention/ difficulty such cases alone are to be placed in the EC on ABS for examination.

Accordingly, Secretary, NBA apprised the members that the NBA Secretariat has cleared **227** (Form I-27, Form II-3, Form III- 197) applications and **209** (Form I- 50, Form II- 1, Form III-155, Form IV- 3) agreements signed and closed **16** (Form I-14, Form-II-1, Form IV- 1) applications between November 2021 – February 2022.

Decision: The applications cleared and agreements executed by NBA were noted by the Authority.

Action: NBA Secretariat

64.04: Proceedings of the 65th meeting of the Expert Committee on Access and Benefit Sharing (EC on ABS) held on 24th January 2022

Secretary, NBA informed that the 65th meeting of the Expert Committee on Access and Benefit Sharing (EC on ABS) was held on 24.01.2022 on a virtual mode. He mentioned that 42 applications were placed before the EC on ABS for examination, out of which ten applications pertains to Form I, one pertains to Form II, one pertains to Form IV and thirty applications pertains to Form III.

2. Dr. Alka Rao informed that ABS should not be levied on applications that have used bio resources from outside India.

3. Shri. Achalender Reddy suggested some improvements in the Proceedings of the 65th meeting of the EC on ABS. He mentioned that in **Form I-Application No. INBA1202102947,**

the geographical location for access of the bio resource should be only the location name and the term "wild" may be removed. Similarly, in **Form I- Application No. INBA1202102897,** the list of bio resources in a single application may be revisited. He suggested that the applicant has to apply for microorganisms separately and for Sugarcane Molasses separately. He added that in **Form II-Application No. INBA2202102873,** the applicant has submitted that he is or has transferred the research results to 8 companies but the EC on ABS has approved only for 6 companies. He requested for the EC to review this application. Shri. Achalender Reddy, further mentioned that applications that have been deferred by the EC on ABS may not be kept before the Authority. Secretary, NBA informed that these applications would be placed before the EC on ABS during the next meeting for their recommendation.

Members discussed the report submitted by the Sub Committee constituted to re-examine the guidelines for upfront payment before accessing biological resources by section 3(2) entities. Secretary, NBA informed that the Sub-Committee has rationalized the levy of benefit sharing across different sectors and in the process the amount to be paid by various stakeholders has been considerably increased compared to the existing guidelines. He further informed the Authority that about 23 petitons are pending before the High Court of Madras, High Court of Telangana and NGT, Chennai challenging the upfront guidelines and therefore accepting the new guidelines would not be appropriate at this stage as the matter is sub-judice. Members decided to retain the existing guidelines on levying upfront payment of benefit sharing for research by Section 3 (2) entities. Dr. Alka Rao informed that the options for non-monetary benefits should also be provided to the entities while levying ABS.

Members further expressed that upfront payment should not have a single slab for different quantities of bio resources. Dr. Unnat Pandit informed that quantity of biological resource for research leading to commercial utilization would be much higher compared to those entities using these resources only for research purpose and therefore there should be different slabs for research. Dr. Alka Rao informed that the levying for DNA samples should be done separately.

Members also suggested that the Expert Committee on ABS should also include experts from Molecular Biology, whenever it is reconstituted and requested NBA to share the composition of the EC on ABS members with the Authority members for their suggestions on different domain experts that can be included during the reconstitution of the EC on ABS. Secretary, NBA informed that the tenure of the EC on ABS would end on 31st March, 2022 and the suggestions

of the Authority members would be taken into account at the time of reconstituting the Expert Committee on ABS.

Decision: a. The applications that have biological resources from outside India or where the origin is not known may be revisited and reviewed by the EC on ABS

b. The applications mentioned by Shri. Achalender Reddy would be reviewed by the EC on ABS.

c. NBA would place the list of new members along with their domain expertise before the Authority, whenever it is reconstituted.

d. The recommendations of the Subcommittee to revise the guidelines to levy upfront payment shall be kept in abeyance till the decision is taken by the Court. The existing guidelines to levy upfront payment for research shall be followed.

e. NBA may share the composition of the EC on ABS members with the Authority members for their suggestions on different domain experts including molecular biologists that can be included during the reconstitution of the EC on ABS after 31st March, 2022.

Action: NBA Secretariat

64.05: To consider the corrigendum in the NBA Medical Attendance Regulations/Guidelines and proposal to revise the NBA Medical Attendance Regulations in consonance with CS (MA) Rules

Secretary, NBA explained that the current NBA Medical Attendance Regulations were approved by the Authority in its 33rd Authority meeting (Agenda no.33:07) held on 17th April 2015. While according approval, the Authority had initially allowed actual reimbursement of outdoor treatment expenses without any restriction with reference to CGHS rates for one year vide clause 7 with a condition that the total reimbursable expenditure for outdoor treatment will be restricted to one month's Pay plus Dearness Allowance per annum. Further the Authority advised the NBA Secretariat to explore options for Health Insurance Schemes.

2. An agenda (Agenda no.37:13) was placed before the 37th Authority meeting held on 22nd March 2016, seeking to accord approval of the Authority for adoption of one month's Pay plus Dearness Allowance per annum for reimbursement of expenses for outdoor treatment as a permanent measure by removing the restriction of one year - imposed in the earlier decision of the Authority. While the Authority accorded approval for the proposal until further orders, it

directed to examine the existing regulations viz-a-viz with other autonomous / statutory organizations in line with extant Rules of Govt. India.

3. Secretary, NBA explained that the C&AG in its Transaction Audit for the Years 2015-16 & 2016-17 had observed that allowing one month's Pay plus Dearness Allowance per annum and not regulating the reimbursement of outdoor treatment expenses in accordance with CGHS rates were contrary to Government prescribed guidelines and advised NBA to review its Regulations in this regard.

4. Chairman, NBA explained that a team of officials of NBA was constituted to study the Medical schemes of a few autonomous / statutory bodies and advised them to visit a few Government Institutions functioning in Chennai to know about the existing Medical schemes for staff in their offices. The team studied the schemes operated by National Green Tribunal, National Institute of Ocean Technology and National Institute of Wind Energy. It was observed by the Team that all the Institutions are broadly following the CGHS and CS(MA) Rules, with minor modifications to suit the local needs as these Institutions are not covered under CGHS. The National Green Tribunal (NGT), a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, has got its Medical Scheme approved by the Ministry and hence the employees were interested to adopt the NGT model.

5. Chairman, NBA suggested that the Medical Scheme followed by NGT, Chennai can be replicated by the NBA with minor modifications as provided in the Annexure. He added that in order to comply with the C&AG audit observations, it is proposed to regulate/restrict the medical claims as per the CGHS prescribed rates by removing the ceiling of one-month basic pay plus DA for indoor treatment with effect from 1st April, 2022.

6. Dr. Unnat Pandit suggested that since NBA is a small entity, some startup hospitals may be considered to create a network for medical assistance and also take care of the medical claims of the employees. Chairman, NBA mentioned that few local hospitals have agreed for providing medical treatment/testing as per rates applicable under the CGHS scheme. Dr. Ramanamurthy, NIOT mentioned that the revised regulations should also cover emergency hospitalization.

7. Shri. Achalender Reddy said that officers on deputation may be given the option to choose the parent cadre scheme or NBA scheme as per Government orders in this regard. He further mentioned that the competent authority to relax the provisions of the scheme may be vested with the Chairperson as CEO of NBA.

8. Dr. Sanjay Kumar, IIHBT suggested that an agreement may be signed with hospitals such as Fortis for the medical claims in line with the CGHS prescribed rates.

Decision: a. The members decided to approve the revised NBA Medical Attendance Regulations/Guidelines after the inclusion of the suggestions made by the members and to follow these Guidelines after getting the approval by the MoEF&CC.

b. Till the proposed scheme is approved by the MoEF&CC, the existing Regulations will be followed with the amendment that the medical claims w.e.f 1st April 2022 (treatment taken on or after 01-04-2022) shall be regulated in accordance with the CGHS approved rates. Accordingly, the ceiling of one month's basic pay and dearness allowance imposed towards reimbursement of outpatient claims will stand deleted from the existing regulations, as the same was not prescribed in CS (MA) Rules / CGHS Scheme.

Action: NBA Secretariat

64.06: To consider the project proposal on Operationalization of BMCs through Core Activity Action Plan (CAAP) by Andhra Pradesh State Biodiversity Board

The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) developed a comprehensive policy for protection, conservation and sustainable use of Red Sanders with the help of an Expert Committee on Red Sanders for utilizing the benefit sharing (BS) amount realized on access of Red Sanders wood. Andhra Pradesh SBB is also one of the major stakeholders that receives the benefit sharing component as Red Sanders species are endemic to Andhra Pradesh, where they are found naturally in five districts.

2. The Expert Committee had recommended to release 20% of the Benefit Sharing Component to be shared with the BMCs through the State Biodiversity Board under 'Serial No. 1 of the Broad Head of Expenditure of the Red Sanders Report' for carrying out activities for conservation, protection and other activities in Red Sanders growing areas. This fund shall be utilized for constitution of Biodiversity Management Committees and preparation of People's Biodiversity Registers which would help in the conservation of the biological resources including Red Sanders.

3. Chairman, NBA explained that AP SBB vide letter dated 15.12.2021 submitted a proposal

seeking Rs.75 crores for FY 2021-2022 & 2022-2023 towards Operationalization of Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) through Core Activities Action Plans (CAAPs) for Conservation of Biodiversity in Andhra Pradesh.

CEO, NMPB informed that NMPB has sanctioned three projects to Andhra Pradesh State Biodiversity Board, viz. Home Herbal Garden (13000), Nursery (13) and IEC Projects (Table 1). Further, she deliberated that it should be ensured that the funds given by NMPB should not be overlapping with the projects funded by NBA and also avoids duplicity if any.

Table 1: Details of projects sanctioned to Andhra Pradesh Biodiversity Board, Andhra Pradesh from NMPB

S.No.	Project	Fund Approved (Lakhs)	Fund Released (Lakhs)
1	Home Herbal Garden (13000)	325	150
2	Nursery (13)	81.25	31.25
3	IEC (training programme)	24	10.2

4. The Members deliberated on the activities undertaken by the Board and they opined that the proposal may be revised into a Detailed Project Proposal outlining the details of activities with specific physical and financial targets and the expected outcomes with focus on conservation of biological resources and ecosystem restoration and how these activities would be audited.

5. The Members also deliberated that the proposal should also include a justification on utilizing ABS funds in areas outside the Red-Sanders areas contrary to the Report of the Expert Committee on Red Sanders and also identify the ABS potential in conserving biological resources in the State.

6. The Members also suggested that a performance audit may be conducted during the mid-course of the Project and towards the end of the Project, to assess the status of Red Sanders conservation.

7. Dr.Alka Rao suggested that the local community in the Red Sanders area may be trained by IWST or other institutes to make handicrafts from Red Sanders species and help in the Atma Nirbhar Bharat and also value addition of Red Sanders.

Decision: a. The project proposal may be revised and the APSBB shall submit a detailed Project Proposal outlining the details of activities with specific physical and financial targets and

the expected outcomes of these activities and how these activities would be audited. It should also include a justification on utilizing these funds in areas outside the Red-Sanders areas contrary to the Report of the Expert Committee on Red Sanders and also identify the ABS potential in conserving biological resources.

b. Performance audit may be conducted during the mid-course and at the end of the Project to ascertain the status of conservation of Red Sanders species.

c. Local community in the Red Sanders area may be trained by IWST or other institutes to make handicrafts from Red Sanders and help in the Atma Nirbhar Bharat and also add value to the species.

Action: NBA Secretariat

64.07: Ratification of decisions on Form-B applications

1. Under agenda item 32.06 of 32nd Authority meeting, it was decided as follows:

   a) *The Chairman, NBA is authorized to accord approval or otherwise for Form- B applications, without referring to the SBB and the EC on ABS.*

   b) *The approval or otherwise on the applications accorded shall be placed in the subsequent authority meetings for ratification.*

2. Secretary, NBA informed that Chairperson, NBA has granted approval for **04** applications of **Form-B** applications and was ratified by the members.

Decision: The Authority members considered and ratified the decisions taken on the 04 Form B applications

Action: NIL

64:08 Details of Form-C applications received by the NBA

The Authority in its 37th meeting held in March 2016 under agenda item 37.14.02, decided that the Indian researchers / scientists should provide prior intimation to the NBA in the prescribed format viz., Form-C for deposition of microorganisms in a repository located in a foreign country to claim a novel species for publication in journals. However, if any non-Indian

person/entity intends to access the deposited Indian biological resource from the foreign repository, he/she should obtain the prior approval of NBA as per Section 3 of the BD Act, 2002. NBA has received 257 such intimations since March 2016 – February 2022 and the same have been reported to the Authority from time to time.

Secretary, NBA informed that since November 2021, the Secretariat has received 26 Form-C applications and the members noted it.

Decision: The information submitted in this regard was noted

Action: NIL

64.09 Inclusion of type specimen/strains available in MoEF&CC designated Repositories as commodity in NTAC- given by Dr. Alka Rao, Authority member

In exercise of the powers conferred by subsection (1) of Section 39 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, read with sections 6 and 12 of Notification S.O. 1911(E), dated 8th November, 2006, and in continuation of this Ministry's Orders dated 28th August, 2008, 12th September, 2012, 8th July 2013, 21st January 2020 and 25th September, 2020, selected Institutions are designated as Repositories by Ministry of Environment and assigned following special roles:

A) In accordance with sub-section (2) of Section 39 of the Act, the designated repository shall also keep in safe custody the representative samples, as voucher specimens of the biological material accessed in accordance with the provisions of Section 19 of the Act, along with relevant information related to the material, such as DNA fingerprints, if so required by the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)

And/ Or

B) The designated repository shall also keep in safe custody the type specimen deposited by any person who discovers a new taxon, in accordance with Forest & Climate Change, Government of India sub-section (3) of Section 39 of the Act.

2. Dr. Alka Rao informed that all the above repositories are acting like BMCs and are conserving the specimen, maintaining the digital records of well characterized specimens of various kinds and are expected to be **self-reliant.**

3. She further explained that in this context the Global status of specimen transactions in all the above listed repositories are free for depositing microorganisms and also for distributing

them as commodity. Dr. Alka Rao opined that research is hampered due to lack of a direct mechanism for transaction of microorganisms and Indian type strains have remain unrecognized and unutilized at global level.

4. She further explained that type strains are essentially required for comparative studies in taxonomy or any basic research. Such strains are deposited in different microbial repositories for long term preservation across the world and are available for purchase or under microbial exchange program(s).

5. Dr. Alka Rao further informed that exchange of microorganisms was allowed globally prior to the implementation of Biological Diversity Act, 2002. Now, it has become difficult to sell/supply any microbial strain(s) to foreigners and by repositories.

6. She further suggested that microbial type strains published in peer reviewed journals and strains required to perform microbiological assays may be considered as "biological resources normally traded as commodities and should be notified under Section 40 of the Biological Diversity Act, to enable their speedy supply to the customers from foreign countries. For example, strains used in probiotics can be sold as commodity as it has high utility and potential. Further, microbial repositories designated by NBA may be authorized to supply these strains to overseas customers with a MTA for basic research including taxonomic studies.

7. Dr.Alka Rao mentioned that the repositories need support to protect and conserve the strains that are deposited by Indian researchers. The repositories mostly are run in project mode and get limited funds from the MoEF&CC. Hence, the repositories need a helping hand in maintaining the cultures. She suggested that NBA should designate these cultures or strains as commodities which will facilitate the repositories to sell the strains.

8. Chairman, NBA informed that as the BD Act is in the process of amendment, the suggestion to include microorganisms at NTAC can be examined later.

9. Dr. Alka Rao suggested that NBA may write to all the repositories requesting information on the strains of Indian origin that have high commercial potential that can be added in the NTC list. She also explained that strains of microorganisms used for commercial value may be listed.

10. Shri. Achalender Reddy mentioned that if a list of potential strains is compiled under Section 40 in the NTC list, there should be a rider stating that they need to get approval if the researcher is going to use the strain only for research.

11. Dr. Unnat Pandit said that this matter is closely connected with DSI. He explained that even if repository supplies to an institute, it has to be confirmed if it is the type strain that has

been requested. He further suggested that this issue may be raised in the meeting of the EC on DSI. To this, the members opined that DSI is not the only method to identify a strain and hence is not closely connected with DSI.

12. Shri. Achalender Reddy mentioned that a committee of microbial and biotechnological experts may be constituted to develop the list of microorganisms having commercial value which can be categorized as NTAC and the recommendation has to be approved by the MoEF&CC before notifying it under Section 40 of the BD Act, 2002.

Decision: As the BD Act is in the process of amendment, it was decided that the request to notify microorganisms as NTAC can be taken up after the amendment process is completed.

Action: NIL

64.10 Monthly review Meeting of State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) & Union Territory Biodiversity Councils (UTBCs)

Consequent to the Order of the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi in O.A. No. 347 of 2016, Chandra Bhal Singh Vs. Union of India & Others directing the MoEF&CC and NBA to monitor the constitution of adequate numbers of Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) as against the local bodies and also documentation of People's Biodiversity Register (PBRs) as per Rule 22 of the Biological Diversity Rules, 2004.

Secretary NBA informed that NBA has been regularly pursuing the matter with the State Biodiversity Boards and Union Territory Councils by conducting monthly review meetings and taking stock of the latest update. He informed that till date, **28** review meetings have been conducted since September 2019 to discuss the progress of setting up of BMCs and preparation of PBRs, mobilization of resources for capacity building of BMCs and preparation of PBRs and various matters related to functioning of SBBs/UTBCs and implementation of the BD Act across the country.

Decision: The information submitted in this regard was noted.

Action: NIL

64.11 Oral evidence before the Joint Committee on the Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2021

The Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2021 was tabled in the Parliament by the

Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change on 16th December, 2021. The Bill was referred to a Joint Committee to examine the Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2021 [JC on BDA] which is chaired by Dr. Sanjay Jaiswal, Hon'ble Member of the Parliament. NBA and other Ministries had been called for the meeting on 28th January 2022 at New Delhi.

2. Secretary, NBA informed the members that the officials of the MoEF&CC, Chairman, NBA and Secretary, NBA participated in the third meeting of the JC on BDA held on 28/01/2022 at New Delhi. Subsequently, the fourth meeting of the JC on BDA was held on 08/02/2022 at New Delhi wherein representatives of eight State Biodiversity Boards viz., Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Uttarakhand also attended.

3. Dr. Kerketta, Advisor, MoEF&CC informed that the fifth JC meeting on BDA will be held on 15th March, 2022 and NBA will be represented by Secretary, NBA.

4. Shri Achalender Reddy requested NBA to share the documents that have been submitted to the Joint Committee on the Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2021

Decision: The documents submitted to the Joint Committee on the Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2021 to be shared with the members of the Authority.

Action: Secretary, NBA

64.12 Study Visit of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table, Rajya Sabha to Goa, Chennai, Bengaluru from 5th To 9th January, 2022 regarding laying of ARs/AAs

Secretary, NBA informed that the Chairman and Secretary, NBA attended the meeting of the Committee on laying of Annual Report/ Audited Accounts on the Table, Rajya Sabha on 07.01.2022 in Chennai. NBA has also submitted the Annual Reports for FY 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 to the MoEF&CC for placing in the Parliament.

Decision: The information submitted in this regard was noted.

Action: NIL

64.13 Meeting of the Reconstituted Expert Committee on Agro-biodiversity

Secretary, NBA informed that the NBA *vide* Office Order F.No. NBA/2/82/Admin/EC/09/21/22/2572 dated 13.10.2021 reconstituted the EC on Agrobiodiversity including Joint Secretary (Seeds), MoA&FW, a representative of PPVFRA and DG, ICFRE or his

representative as members of the EC as decided by the Authority. He further mentioned that the first meeting of the reconstituted Expert Committee on Agro-biodiversity was held on 14 February, 2022.

Shri. Achalender Reddy suggested that a legal expert may be invited as a special invitee in the EC on Agrobiodiversity meeting.

Decision: The members decided that a legal expert may be invited as a special invitee in the EC on Agrobiodiversity meeting.

Action: Secretary, NBA

64.14 Transaction Audit Report for the year 2018-19 to 2020-21

Indian Audit and Accounts Department, Office of the Director General of Audit, Environment and Scientific Departments, had carried out "Transaction Audit" for the years 2018-2019 to 2020-2021 during September 2021 to November 2021 and forwarded the Draft Audit report after dropping 18 old observations and forwarded 17 new draft audit observations.

Chairman, NBA informed that the observations of the Transaction Audit report states that there are no major irregularities. However, the replies for these audit observations made by the Audit have been sent to the Indian Audit and Accounts Department for the purpose of dropping the same.

Decision: The information submitted in this regard was noted.

Action: NIL

64.15 PBR Monitoring Committee (PBRMC) Report & orders relating to its reconstitution

In pursuance of the Order passed by Hon'ble NGT in the matter of Chandrabhal Singh Vs. Union of India O. A. 347 of 2016 dated 09.08. 2019, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of India has constituted two Monitoring Committees vide OM.C-12027/6/2016-CSIII (Pt) dtd.15.01.2020, "to oversee the quality of PBRs on sample basis by evolving a suitable mechanism". NBA in consultation with the two committees proposed a plan of work for logical organization of the task assigned to the PBR Monitoring Committee. Chairman, NBA informed that based on the advice given by MoEF&CC to initiate the process of reconstituting the PBR Monitoring Committee, NBA has submitted a list of experts to

MoEF&CC.

Decision: The information submitted in this regard was noted.

Action: NIL

64.16 Biodiversity Samrakshan Internship Programme 2022

Chairman, NBA informed the members that the "Biodiversity Samrakshan Internship Programme" (BSIP) of National Biodiversity Authority in association with UNDP have selected 25 candidates for Internship and 5 have been kept as reserve through a rigorous process of selection of candidates pan India through a written examination followed by interview. He informed that 4 interns have been placed in NBA Secretariat and the remaining have been placed in different SBBs and in the Ministry.

Decision: The information submitted in this regard was noted.

Action: NIL

64.17 Asian Water Bird Census (AWC) 2022

Chairman, NBA informed the members about the Asian Water Bird Census (AWC) 2022 which is a site-based counting scheme for monitoring waterbird numbers organized every year by Wetlands International (WI). He further mentioned that this is the first time that WI partnered with NBA. All the State Biodiversity Boards, UT Biodiversity Councils and Biodiversity Management Committees participated in a country-wide monitoring of water birds. The members appreciated the efforts taken to energize the State Biodiversity Boards, UT Biodiversity Councils and Biodiversity Management Committees.

Decision: The members appreciated and noted the information.

Action: NIL

The meeting ended with vote of thanks from and to the Chair.

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जे. जस्टिन मोहन, आईएफ़एस
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Annexure I

List of Participants

Sl No	Name and Designation
	Official Members
1	**Dr. V.B. Mathur,** Chairman, National Biodiversity Authority, Chennai
2	**Dr. S. Kerketta,** Advisor &Scientist G,CS-III Division, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, New Delhi. s.kerketta66@gov.in
3	**Dr. Manoj Kumar Modi,** Department of Biotechnology, New Delhi
4	**Dr. Gunasekaran,** Assistant Commissioner (Seeds), Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare
5	**Dr. Sanjay Kumar,** Director, IIHBT, Palampur
6.	**Prof. (Dr) Tanuja Manoj Nesari**, CEO, NMPB, Ministry of AYUSH, New Delhi
7.	**Smt. Jaya, IAS,** Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, New Delhi
7	**Dr. TR Sharma-**DDG-CS-ICAR, New Delhi
8	**Dr.M.V.Ramana Murthy** Director & Scientist-G National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) Ministry of Earth Sciences
9	**Dr Chandra Shekhar Sanwal,** Deputy Chief Executive Officer (CEO), AYUSH, New Delhi.
	Non-official Members
10	**Shri. C. Achalender Reddy, IFS**(Retd.), Director, Centre for Innovations in Public Systems, achal.reddy@gmail.com
11	**Dr. Joykumar Meitei Laishram,**Professor and Dean,College of Agriculture, Central Agriculture University,jmlaishram@rediffmail.com
12	**Dr. Alka Rao,**Principal Scientist,CSIR- Institute of Microbial Technology(CSIR-IMTECH), Chandigarh – 160036, raoalka@imtech.res.in
13	**Shri. M.S. Chaitra,**Director and Fellow, Aarohi,chaitra78@gmail.com
14	**Dr. Unnat P. Pandit,** Professor of IP, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, IPMC, JNU, New Delhi
	Secretary to the Authority
15	**Shri. J. Justin Mohan,** IFS, Secretary, National Biodiversity Authority, Chennai