

## **National Biodiversity Authority Celebrates 18<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2021**

The National Biodiversity Authority celebrated its 18<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day on October 1, 2021 in a hybrid manner. Mrs. B.V. Umadevi, Additional Secretary, MoEFCC, Government of India was the Guest of Honour. Mrs. Supriya Sahu, Principal Secretary, Environment, Climate Change and Forest, Govt. of Tamil Nadu was the Chief Guest. Over 150 participants joined in this celebration.

The event began with the welcome address by Dr. V. B. Mathur, Chairperson, NBA. He said that the Foundation Day was unique for three reasons. Firstly, it offered an opportunity to celebrate what NBA had achieved in the last 17 years of its existence. Secondly, it provided an occasion to acknowledge and express gratitude to all those who had contributed in the growth and progress of NBA. Lastly and most importantly it provided an opportunity to make a resolve to further enhance the functioning of NBA. He said that the last one year at NBA had been very intense and the targets set by Hon'ble National Green Tribunal in the context of BMC constitution and PBR formulation on a Pan-India basis had been achieved with the help of professional inputs received from a large number of stakeholders. He said that it was important to re-set the NBA agenda based on the edifice of inclusion, diversity and innovation in respect of the local communities and at the same time ensuring the sustainability of the biological resources.

This was followed by the Special Address by the Guest of Honour Mrs. B. V. Umadevi wherein she congratulated NBA for successfully undertaking a range of activities for effective implementation of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. Mrs. Supriya Sahu in her Special Address complimented the NBA for its significant contribution in the implementation of the Biological Diversity Act 2002 and for providing technical guidance to the State Biodiversity Boards and Union Territory Biodiversity Councils. She reiterated the commitment of the Govt. of Tamil Nadu and

informed that her government was in the process of designating 38 youths as “Green Fellows” in all districts. She highlighted the importance of identifying and designating Biodiversity Heritage Sites. She explained the significance of designating District Forest Officers as Biodiversity Officers” in each district for effective implementation of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. She said that the Government of Tamil Nadu would provide all assistance to NBA in providing a permanent location in Chennai as it was a matter of pride to have NBA in the State of Tamil Nadu. She further said that women were providing very valuable inputs for effective biodiversity conservation and this should be further upscaled. She said that NBAs technical assistance would be needed in building capacity of stakeholders at various tiers of governance.

The function formally concluded with vote of thanks by Sh. Justin Mohan, Secretary, NBA. He thanked the dignitaries on and off the dais as well as the members, stakeholders and employees of NBA. He also highlighted the achievements of NBA with regard to approvals accorded. He also gave statistics of the benefits sharing component received and shared with the benefits claimers. The event was compered by Ms. Lakshmi Somanathan, Young Professional (Legal).

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