

Biodiversity matters

NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY AUTHORITY, CHENNAI



FROM THE CHAIRPERSON'S DESK

We are pleased to share the fourth issue of the 'Biodiversity Matters' newsletter covering an update on the activities of the National Biodiversity Authority during the period July to August, 2017. NBA celebrated India's Seventieth Independence Day at its headquarters in Chennai with the true spirit of patriotism and pledging to contribute more to the country towards conserving the bioresources in the years to come.



As a prelude to preparing India's Sixth National Report to the CBD, regional consultations on mainstreaming biodiversity were carried out as a joint initiative by MoEFCC in association with NBA and UNDP at Guwahati, Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and Chandigarh.

NBA is committed to strengthening the implementation of the Biological Diversity Act 2002. In this regard, high-level interactions and brainstorming sessions were convened for discussions on different issues. Further, meetings of the Expert Committees were organized on Normally Traded Commodities, Agrobiodiversity, Access and Benefit Sharing and contribution to the International Treaties/Conventions. Awareness and capacity building activities were continued under various projects viz. UNEP-GEF-MoEFCC ABS Project, CEBPOL and GIZ.

We look forward to your continued cooperation and feedback.

B. Meenakumari
Chairperson

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Independence Day Celebration

The Seventieth Indian Independence Day was celebrated in the National Biodiversity Authority in a befitting manner at its headquarters in Chennai on the 15th day of August, 2017. In the bright and sunny Monday morning, the majestic tri-color National Flag was unfurled by Dr. B. Meenakumari, Chairperson, NBA in the lawns of the TICEL Biopark premises, where the HQ of NBA is located. Keeping up the spirits of this important national day, the administrative staff of NBA took keen interest to arrive early in the morning to decorate the space around lawns with colorful tri-color 'thoranams' and rangolis. The flag-hoisting was followed by the play of heart-stirring National Anthem.



The Chairperson, NBA while admiring the seventy years of the development of the country since Independence, remembered with reverence the struggle made by our leaders, freedom fighters and virjawns. In her brief and bright speech, she emphasized the need of understanding our capabilities to contribute more to the country.



Update on Activities

Thirteenth Meeting of the Expert Committee on Normally Traded Commodities held on 21st July, 2017 at NBA, Chennai

NBA had organized the Thirteenth Meeting of the (Second of the Reconstituted) Expert Committee on Normally Traded Commodities on 21st July, 2017 at NBA, Chennai under the Chairmanship of Shri. D. K. Ved, IFS (Retd.) and Shri. C. Achalender Reddy, IFS as Co-Chair. The EC considered various proposals received from stakeholders such as the representation made by Hon'ble MP (LS), Shri. Ramesh Bais relating to the inclusion of Sal (*Shorea robusta*), Kokum (*Garcinia indica*) and Mango (*Mangifera indica*) in the MEIS Scheme; representation made by Hon'ble Ex MP of Parliament (RS) Smt. Monika Das and Chairman of the Paper Unit Chapter of Kumaun Garwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry as well as by others such as Department of Agriculture Cooperation & Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW), National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) and Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) to consider to recommend species/ biological resources as normally traded as commodities (NTACs) under section 40 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.



Eighth Meeting of EC on Agrobiodiversity

The eighth meeting of the EC on Agrobiodiversity was held on 1st August, 2017 at the NBA, Chennai under the chairmanship of Dr. R. S. Rana, Shri T. Rabikumar, Secretary NBA highlighted the progress made under all the agenda items and pointed out the significance of addressing the concerns raised on 2006 Guidelines on International Collaborative Research Projects. He also informed that the EC's recommendation on providing legal protection to traditional knowledge of local communities, associated with the breeds developed and conserved by them, had already been approved in principle by the Authority and looked forward to have further discussion on this process. He also appreciated the agenda item on implementing the National Biodiversity Target 7 focusing on halting the loss of genetic diversity in crops, farm animals and other major components of agricultural biodiversity. Dr. B. Meenakumari, Chairperson NBA appreciated the relevance of on-going discussions, held under different agenda items, and the progress already made. She mentioned that the International Agrobiodiversity Congress, held in November, 2016 was co-sponsored by the NBA and whose recommendations on various agrobiodiversity issues required follow up actions. She also referred CBD-COP- 13 and COP-MOP- 2 of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS, held in Cancun in December, 2016, pointing out the relevance of their decisions to the EC's agenda. Dr. R. S. Rana, explained the progress made under each agenda item to the EC members and provided recommendations. Dr. Arivudai Nambi was invited as a special invitee to participate in the meeting and share his views on *in-situ* on-farm conservation of agrobiodiversity.



Sadbhavana Diwas Pledge

MoEFCC had requested that Sadbhawana Diwas to be observed by NBA on 18th August 2017. In this regard, all the officers, staff, project and outsourcing staff of NBA assembled in the Conference hall on 18th August 2017 and took a pledge to work for the emotional oneness and harmony of all the people of India regardless of caste, region, religion or language and to resolve all difference among us through dialogue and constitutional means without resorting to violence.



Hindi Diwas Celebration

National Biodiversity Authority celebrated Hindi Diwas 2017 in a grand manner by organizing various competitions and a formal Hindi diwas function. The celebrations commenced on 13th September by holding various competitions like Hindi Gayan, Smrithi Prathiyogitha, Samachar Vachan and Hindi Quiz, which received enthusiastic participation from the staff of NBA. Dr. P. R. Vasudevan, Senior Hindi Officer from the Accountant General (A&E) Office, Chennai, acted as the judge for competitions. Winners of the events were felicitated on the 14th September in the formal Hindi Diwas ceremony. The formal Hindi Diwas function on 14th began with a welcome address by Dr. B. Meenakumari, Chairperson NBA. Shri. M. Anandan, DDG, Doordarshan was invited as the Chief Guest for the function. He elaborated the historical relevance of Hindi language in connecting people especially during the Independence struggle.

Dr. R. M. Srinivasan, Deputy Director (Retd.), Official Language Department delivered the Hindi Diwas special address. He gave a lively and informative speech about his experiences with the language. Among many things, he enlightened about the directness and simplicity of the Devnagari script by drawing parallels with other languages. He also stressed the importance of dedication and perseverance using the sincere efforts of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in the creation of the Constitution of India as an example.



Swachhta Diwas

The Government of India carrying out the Swachh Bharat Mission did a nationwide campaign "Swachhta Hi Seva" (Cleanliness is service) between 17th September and 2nd October 2017. In order to participate in Nation wide campaign, NBA carried out one of the activities, i.e. "Plant a Tree". The Chairperson and Secretary NBA, planted trees in the TICEL premises on 29th September 2017.



NBA also carried out other similar activities for 'Swachh Bharat Pakhwada' in and around Chennai;

- Coastal cleanup at Kovalam beach and
- Forest buffer area cleanup near Kurumbaram forest.



Forty Second Authority Meeting

Forty Second meeting of Authority (Governing Body) was held on 21st August, 2017 in which the items like recommendation of the 43rd meeting of Expert Committee on ABS on the access/IP/ Transfer of results of research applications, minutes of the Meeting of Core expert group held on 16th June, 2017 to develop the modalities for utilizing the benefit sharing amount accrued on the access of bovine cattle embryos, minutes of the meeting of the Core Expert Group for Implementing the Nagoya Protocol on ABS held on 3rd March, 2017, proposal of National Research Centre on Equines, Hisar to designate the National Centre for veterinary Type Cultures as repository under section 39 of the BD Act, draft clause (the obligations under the BD Act) developed by the Core Expert Group to incorporate in the sanction order of the funding agencies/ departments, recommendation of the 44th meeting of Expert Committee on ABS held on 8th and 9th August, 2017, summary of decision of the 13th meeting of the Expert Committee on Normally Traded Commodities held on 21st July, 2017 and consider the draft proceedings of the 8th meeting of the NBA's Expert Committee on Agrobiodiversity held on 1st August, 2017.



ABS Applications

The NBA has received 243 applications which are complete in all respects and taken up for processing since April 2017. So far, 163 applications have been cleared by the Authority and draft agreements sent to the applicants for execution. NBA has granted approval in the form of agreements to 152 applicants.

Formulated Modalities to Utilize the Benefit Sharing

A core expert group for developing the modalities for utilizing the benefit sharing amount accrued on the access of bovine cattle embryos was constituted under the chairmanship of Dr. A. K. Misra, Vice Chancellor, Animal and Fishery Sciences University, Maharashtra. The group met on 16th June, 2017 at NBA and recommended that the benefits accrued may be used for research, conservation and sustainable use of the breed viz., Ongole, Gir and Kankrej.

Sharing of Benefits to Benefit Claimers

- (a) NBA has released a sum of ₹ 3 crores to the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department through Andhra Pradesh State Biodiversity Boards as a first instalment for conservation and sustainable use of Red Sanders.
- (b) The benefit sharing from M/s Pepsico Holdings India Pvt. Ltd. towards access of sea weeds in the coastal districts of Tamil Nadu was released to Tamil Nadu SBB for further disbursement to the beneficiaries.

High-level Interactions

- (a) Dr. Ajai Narayan Jha, IAS., Secretary, MoEFCC visited the NBA on 15th July, 2017. During his visit, the Chairperson and Secretary, NBA explained the achievements and works carried out by NBA to him. He interacted with the team of NBA heads on, techno-legal matters and other administrative issues.



Expert Committee on Access and Benefit Sharing

Forty Fourth meeting of Expert Committee on Access and Benefit Sharing was held on 8th and 9th August, 2017 to evaluate the applications and recommended to the Authority for consideration. The committee evaluated around 124 applications and other techno-legal issues and made recommendations thereof.



Contribution to the International Treaties/Conventions

(a) The NBA represented in the meeting organized by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation on to discuss the agenda items of the 7th Session of the Governing Body of the ITPGRFA under the chairmanship of the Joint Secretary (Seeds) on 10th October at New Delhi, and provided the inputs to the negotiation.

(b) Based on the nomination by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the Technical Officer (Benefit Sharing), NBA participated in the International Symposium on Implementation of ABS System under the Nagoya Protocol: Sharing lessons and discussing future challenges at Seoul, South Korea on 6th July 2017. The presentation on implementation of the ABS mechanism in India was made and participated in the subsequent discussions.

(b) Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra, Director General, ICAR & Secretary, Department of Agriculture Research and Education, GoI visited NBA office on 7th August, 2017 wherein the issues of common interest like collaborative research projects, ITPGRFA, agrobiodiversity were discussed.



(c) Under the Article 17 of the Nagoya Protocol on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization, Parties are required to issue a permit or its equivalent at the time of access as evidence that access to genetic resources was based on prior informed consent and that mutually agreed terms were established. India being a party to the Nagoya Protocol, NBA has uploaded 75 approvals granted in the ABS CH platform and generated Internationally Recognized Certificate of Compliance.

(d) As per the decision taken by the 39th Authority meeting, NBA constituted a small group to modify the draft (revised) guidelines for operationalization of BMC. The small group met on 27th and 28th September, 2017 and revised the guidelines after having discussion in detail.

(e) The Secretary, NBA participated in the meeting of the Breed Registration Committee held on 4th August, 2017 for Registration of Livestock and Poultry Breeds.



Consultations on Mainstreaming Biodiversity: National Biodiversity Action Plan, National Biodiversity Targets and India's Sixth National Report to Convention on Biological Diversity

The MOEFCC in collaboration with NBA and the UNDP initiated actions to prepare India's Sixth National Report to the CBD, which is required to be submitted to the CBD Secretariat by December 31, 2018. Towards this, five regional consultation workshops at Guwahati (17-18 August, 2017), Lucknow (22-23 August 2017), Ahmedabad (7-8th September, 2017), Chandigarh (14-15 September, 2017) and Hyderabad (21-22 September, 2017) were organized, with concerned stakeholders for creating awareness on National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) and National Biodiversity Targets (NBTs), as well as for seeking inputs for preparation of India's sixth National Report to the CBD.

Nearly 400 participants from all 29 States including officers from concerned departments including Agriculture, Rural Development, Tourism, Forest, Commerce and Industry etc.; key organisations working in the area of biodiversity conservation including Wildlife Institute of India, Zoological Survey of India, Botanical Survey of India, GB Pant Institute; and representatives from Industry, Non-Government Organisations and academia participated in these workshops.

A brochure on "Mainstreaming biodiversity: National Biodiversity Action Plan, National Biodiversity Targets and India's Sixth National Report to Convention on Biological Diversity" prepared for these workshops was released. The brochure has been translated in Hindi and regional languages for these workshops. In line with the initiatives under Digital India, a specific web portal has been developed for seeking inputs for India's Sixth National Report to the CBD. The web portal (www.nationalreport6.com) was formally launched at the workshop and can be accessed for sharing information on initiatives and actions being taken for achieving the 12 National Biodiversity Targets for the Sixth National Report.

Capacity Building Programmes

(a) The trainees of Forest Range Officers from T. S. Forest Academy, Hyderabad have visited NBA on 12th June 2017, as part of their induction training programme. During the visit, the trainees were briefed about the Guidelines on ABS Regulations, applicability of BD Act for various activities and its provisions, e-filing of ABS applications and its process, also the role of officers in the field for implementing the BD Act particularly on enforcement, facilitating documentation of PBR, etc.



(b) The Four Assistant Secretaries from the MoEFCC have visited the National Biodiversity Authority on 18th and 19th July 2017, as a part of their field visits. The officials interacted with the Chairperson, NBA, Secretary, NBA and other Sectional heads on topics such as ABS mechanism, online application process, BMC formation, PBR preparation, IPR, etc.



(c) Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy (IGNFA), Dehradun is mandated to impart knowledge and skills to the professional foresters and help them to develop competence for managing the country's forest and wildlife resources on a sustainable basis. In the Academy, training is provided at different levels of officers in the Indian Forest Service besides the new entrants to the service. NBA has joined hands with the IGNFA for conducting capacity building programme for both IFS probationers and in-service IFS officers on Biodiversity Governance. Accordingly, a two days' capacity building programme on Biodiversity Governance was organized for the 85 IFS probationer and in-service IFS officers from 27th to 28th July, 2017 at IGNFA, Dehradun. The programme was well received by the participants.



PROJECTS UNDERWAY



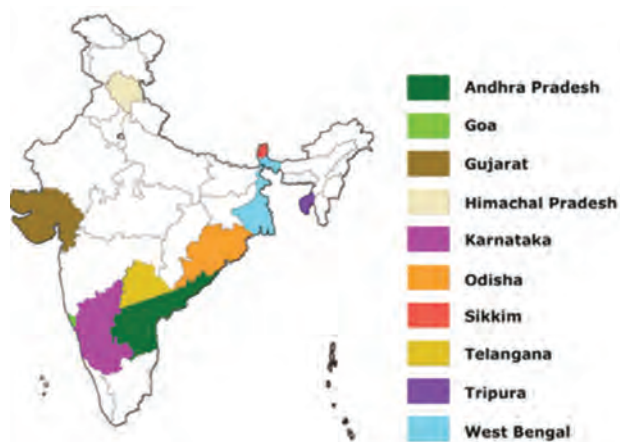
UNEP – GEF – MoEFCC ABS Project

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



The UNEP – GEF – MoEFCC 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.

This 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



Activities

An awareness programme on Biological Diversity Act and Rules of the State Biodiversity Board in Karnataka was held during July, 2017 at Bengaluru, Karnataka. The program was participated by the decision makers, policy makers and bio-resource based industries and academicians from the State. Dr. Ishwar C. Poojar, Project Manager, UNEP-GEF, NBA participated and addressed the gathering with processes involved in ABS mechanism among the stakeholders.



An interactive capacity building programme on concepts of Biodiversity, Biological Diversity Act and Access Benefit Sharing (ABS) mechanism was held during August, 2017 at Haritha Berm Park, APTDC, Bhavanipuram, Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh organized for the stakeholders such as representatives of local bodies, line departments and scientific communities across the state. Dr. Ishwar C. Poojar provided the inputs on the ABS mechanism with some examples from Andhra Pradesh besides invited speakers from Andhra Pradesh who dealt with other focus areas covering the bio-resources and biological diversity with examples to the gathering.

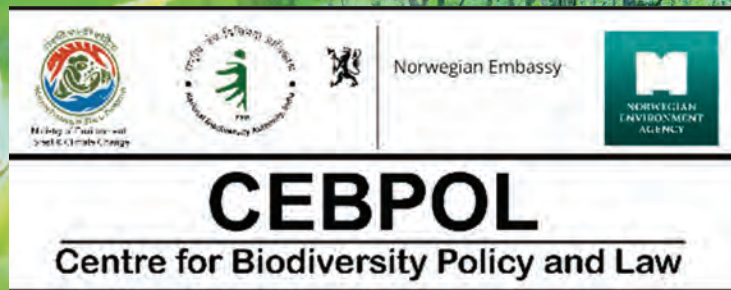




Interactive workshops on the Biological Diversity Act and Rules alongside ABS mechanism were held at *Chail, Shimla* and *Dharmashala in Himachal Pradesh* during September, 2017 with legal professionals from Bar Association, Forest Department Officials from various forest circles of Himachal Pradesh. The programs involved the sessions on the importance of biodiversity and bio-resources of the state.

Explanations on the select bio-resources and some cases of relevant to BD Act and ABS mechanism currently debated at various levels of courts in India. Dr. Ishwar Poojar provided the overview of ABS mechanism at the national level drawing the experiences from the provincial states wherein the project is in operation. Specific session on the act and rules were dealt by Shri. Kunal Satyarthi, Joint Member Secretary, HPSBB and other invited speakers from the state.





Indo - Norwegian collaborative Program

Meeting on Collaboration between NIRDPR and NBA for Capacity Building on Biodiversity Governance

The preliminary discussions took place on 1st August 2017, both NIRDPR and NBA officials decided to join hands and conveyed a very long discussion on how to move forward with this collaboration for building capacity on biodiversity governance. Moving forward, the second round of discussion happened on 12th September 2017 at Centre for Natural Resource Management, NIRDPR Campus, Hyderabad.

In this collaborative meeting, following proposals were made; A working group of 2 members has been nominated by the Secretariat, NBA and a similar kind of working group is requested to be formed from NIRDPR end so that it would ease in having a good interaction and further talks on collaborative activities within the working group which could discuss and work jointly. In the already existing training program with clientele's/stakeholders such as Line departments, ETCs, DRDAs, Gram Panchayat Sarpanchs, etc there will be inclusions of 2 to 3 sessions on Biological Diversity. Such a training program is planned to be held in the month of December 2017. Taking forward this training into a full fledge 3 to 4 day training program exclusively and as an ongoing program on biological diversity topics. For this said training program, a training module and TOT manual for 3 to 4 target group specific training modules would also be developed by NIRDPR for the year 2018. The TOT programs is planned to be conducted zone wise (south, north, east and west) first, then by the SIRDs in the respective states. NBA may also plan to conduct brainstorming session and identify some core areas that need coverage. NIRDPR also may be given an opportunity to attend the SBB meetings so as to get well acquainted with the problems that are faced by SBBs that will in turn help them to cover those core areas. NIRDPR also may be given an orientation on Biodiversity governance, Biodiversity Management Committees and benefit sharing mechanisms. NIRDPR can also help NBA in documenting some case studies which may be utilised as tools for the TOT. It was also discussed that NIRDPR-NBA jointly may conduct an online program wherein the TOT manual will be uploaded in the website and sensitisation program will be conducted based on the prepared TOT module and manual.

Island Invasive Conference 2017, Dundee University, Scotland.

Dr. S. Sandilyan, Fellow on Invasive Alien Species, CEBPOL NBA attended the Island Invasive Conference 2017 that was held at Dundee University, Scotland. More than 275 researchers from 44 countries took part and shared their research experience in island invasive species management. Some of the important presentations of the program are given below:

- Securing the seabird heritage in the isles of Scilly - Jaclyn Pearson.
- The American Mink eradication from the Outer Hebrides of Scotland – Macleod.
- Eradication of Black rats in Shiant islands of Scotland– Chariottee.
- Red squirrel eradication in Scotland – Tonkin.
- Stoats eradication in Orkneys area – Dr Martin.
- Hedge hogs eradication in UIST islands of Europe - Charless Thompson.
- Eradication of invasive cray fishes.

Some of the Important Outcomes of the Conference

- Eradication of mammals, fishes and birds in islands are possible only if we have more planning and dedication.
- Before implementing eradication programmes, special care should be given to political and legal issues, technical feasibility, environmental acceptability, capacity, financial feasibility, sustainability and social acceptability, planning, regulations, media support, legislation and capacity building will highly help for the end success of the programme.
- Public awareness and participation is a key factor behind every successful eradication programme.
- Control of invasive plants still remain in their infancy compared to well established animal eradication.
- Components including prevention, early warning and rapid response and management and prioritization are needed for better management.
- Lessons and new strategies learned from the failures are important for future programmes.



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INDO-GERMAN ACCESS AND BENEFIT SHARING PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

Indo-German Access and Benefit Sharing Partnership Project

Indo-German Access and Benefit-sharing partnership project is currently focusing on establishing baseline database of certain highly traded bio-resources in the state of Maharashtra and Uttarakhand. This study was undertaken with the help of organisations that are actively dealing with aspects of NTFPs in two states. The outcome of this study will be used to explore mechanisms in making ABS compliant value-chains of bio-resource trade. Project has proposed locations for establishing pilot Biodiversity Management Committees in the project states. Capacity building of BMCs will be taken up

during the next year. The project assisted the Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board in many of its operational aspects and a pilot document for project implementation in the states has been prepared. Project also assisted in translation of guidelines for operationalizing Biodiversity Management Committees, a film of 'ABS Simply Explained' has been translated in Tamil.

Developing state-specific awareness and communication tools for Maharashtra and Uttarakhand will be taken up in coming months in addition to workshops for various stakeholders.

Link for film on ABS Simply Explained in Tamil:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPZJPOEpjds#action=share>





Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change
Government of India



BIODIVERSITY FINANCE INITIATIVE (BIOFIN) UNDER THE GOI-UNDP

‘STRENGTHENING NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT’



Participants of the BIOFIN Scoping Meeting towards preparation of a Biodiversity Finance Plan and a Resource Mobilization Strategy for the effective implementation of India's National Biodiversity Action Plan and its 12 NBTs held on 24, August, 2017 at NBA, Chennai

BIOFIN activities in India have picked up momentum in the third quarter of 2017 and several BIOFIN steps such as Nationally Driven Appraisal of Programme and Institutional Review (PIR) and Biodiversity Expenditure Review (BER) have been completed by the technical agencies and steps were taken to share, validate and finalize the results obtained in the process through stakeholder consultations. State level assessment of public expenditure for biodiversity in two pilot states of Maharashtra and Uttarakhand were also completed and currently efforts are being made to validate those results through stakeholder consultations.

NBA carried out the Finance Need Assessment (FNA) for implementing the National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP, 2008) and to achieve the National Biodiversity Targets (NBTs) (Addendum 2014 to NBAP, 2008) and a draft report in this regard is finalized. A total of 200 biodiversity relevant

schemes of 12th FYP enumerated and NBAP thematic area-wise attribution of biodiversity financial needs were carried out from sectoral budgetary projections of the 12th FYP Plan by keeping them as baseline. Reconciliation of biodiversity financial attribution methodologies for BER and FNA at the national level were carried out between NBA and the WII.

Towards the preparation of the Biodiversity Finance Plan (BFP), prospective Technical Agencies such as Institute for Financial Management and Research, Chennai and Centre for Innovations in Public Systems CIPS, Hyderabad were identified. This is in addition to the already existing technical agencies such as WII, Dehradun and NIPFP, New Delhi.

Key activities undertaken include:

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

- I. MOEFCC organized a BIOFIN Review and Planning meeting on 3rd August, 2017 at MOEFCC, New Delhi involving BIOFIN technical partners.
- II. The NBA and WII organized a BIOFIN meeting on Reconciling Financial Attribution Methodologies followed under the Biodiversity Expenditure Review and Finance Needs Assessment on 7th - 8th August, 2017 at NBA, Chennai.
- III. The NBA in consultation with MOEFCC organized a Scoping Meeting under the BIOFIN on 24 August, 2017 towards preparation of a Biodiversity Finance Plan and a Resource Mobilization Strategy for the effective implementation of India's National Biodiversity Action Plan and its 12 NBTs involving UNDP and CIPS, Hyderabad.

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



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 ccbcebpol@nbaindia.org

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