

Assam State Biodiversity Board

Minutes of 14th Meeting of the Board held on 30th April 2015

The 14th Meeting of the Board was held at Board Office, Rehabari, Guwahati from 11.30 hrs onwards. The meeting was chaired by Shri D. Mathur, PCCF, Assam.

Dr. Anwaruddin Choudhury, IAS, renowned wildlife conservationist and Secretary, Secretariat Administration Department, Govt. of Assam was a special invitee to this meeting. A List of the Members and Invitees present in the Meeting is at **Annexure-I**.

The agenda wise discussions were initiated by the Member Secretary:

1. The Minutes of the 13th Board Meeting were circulated and no comments received. Therefore these Minutes taken as confirmed.
2. **Action taken on agenda items of previous meetings:**
 - a. The Board noted the following issues:
 - i. Progress in Biodiversity Research Associate Program: engagement of BRAP Associates in Mayong and Barak Valley.
 - ii. Initiation of works for preparation of 'Panel of Experts' for the Board. The members were also requested to facilitate nomination of experts.
 - iii. Non-finalization of following proposals that are still under consideration with the Government:
 1. Amendment to the Assam Biodiversity Rules-2010.
 2. Creation of Secretarial posts for the Board.
 3. Organizational structure and draft Service Regulation of the Board.
 - iv. Completion of documentation work of spider project.
 - v. Cancellation of Biodiversity awareness project through Asian Institute of Management.
3. **The Board was informed of the following:**
 - a. Formation of 171 BMCs in the state except Autonomous Councils where the process is still underway.
 - b. On-going on field works in 68 Anchalik BMCs for preparation of People's Biodiversity Registers (PBR).
 - c. Completion of field works of PBRs at Hajo, Anchalik BMC.
 - d. Receipt of final version of the District-PBR of Nagaon, that has been vetted by the Technical Support Group.

- e. The status of the following on-going projects:
 - i. Spider Project: Draft ready, to be published after final editing.
 - ii. Insect Fauna Documentation Project: First Quarter progress Report received.
 - iii. Wild Edible Bio-resources Project: First Quarter progress Report received.
 - iv. Fish Diversity Project: The PI has sought time of one month for submission of first quarter report.
- f. Publications of the following:
 - i. Annual Report for FY 2013-14.
 - ii. An English Brochure "Assam: Land of Red River and Blue Hills".
 - iii. Two poster standees (Agri-Horti Show).
- g. Grants received by the Board since its last meeting:
 - i. From NBA : Rs 9.50 Lakh
 - ii. From State Government : Rs 50.00 Lakh
- h. Extension of the lease period of the office premise up to 31st March 2016.
- i. The Board also took notice of the following events:
 - i. An interactive meeting of the Board with select faculty, research scholars and students of Cotton College, HandiqueGirls College and Arya Vidyapeeth College, held at Cotton College on 7th January 2015.
 - ii. Participation of the Board in the 2nd Assam International Agri-Horti Show 2015 held at Khanapara from 10th -15th February.
 - iii. Seminar on "Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation" organized by Board and State Pollution Control Board in collaboration with State Forest Department on 13th February, 2015.
 - iv. Participation of Scientific Officer in the 2nd National Biodiversity Congress 2015 in Trivandrum organized by Kerala State Biodiversity Board.
 - v. Participation of Member Secretary-ASBB at the International Conference on sustainable Development and Environmental Jurisprudence at New Delhi on 14th to 15th March, 2015 organized by National Green Tribunal.
 - vi. Participation of Chairman and Member Secretary of the Board at the Conference of State Environment and Forest Ministers at New Delhi on 6th – 7th April, 2015 organized by MoEF & CC.

4. **Declaration of Threatened Species of the State:** The Board was informed about initiation of the process for compilation of the already existing threatened flora and fauna in the State. Consultations are on with other State Boards on methodology to be adopted for this work. Dr. Anwaruddin Choudhury was requested to provide inputs in this matter. He was also requested to assist the Board in identification of Biodiversity Heritage Site and in preparation of 'Expert Panel'
5. **Declaration of Biodiversity Heritage Sites:** The Board was informed that nominations for identification and declaration of significant ecological sites have been sought from the local bodies/ government departments / NGOs and other organization. The DFOs and DCs have been approached to facilitate the process. During discussions it was suggested that:
 - a. A communication may be sent to all DCs , preferably from the Chairman of the Board informing about the benefits that would accrue to the local people on declaration of such sites. The DCs may be specifically requested to discuss this in DDC Meeting with all line departments.
 - b. If felt necessary, the last date for submission of nominations to be extended beyond 31st May 2015.
6. **KFW project:** The Board was informed about a scoping exercise carried out by the KEW (German Government) for a project on biodiversity conservation in Karbi-Anglong-Kaziranga landscape. The Board suggested that:
 - a. Formation of Biodiversity Management Committees (BMC) in Karbi-Anglong Autonomous Council shall be emphasized as a pre-condition for this project.
 - b. The responsibilities of the Project Management Unit (PMU) and that of the Board shall clearly outlined.
7. **The Board ratified the following actions:**
 - a. Research Permissions granted to four applications:
 - i. Mr. Mitrajit Deb, Ph.D Research Scholar, Assam University, Silchar for study on dietary aspects of Western Hoolock Gibbon in PAs of Cachar District, Assam.

- ii. Mr. Jintu Sarma, Ph.D Research Scholar, Tezpur University for study of 'Dicot Flora' of Sonitpur District, Assam.
 - iii. Ms. Ranju Chetri, Ph.D Research Scholar, NEHU for Molecular and Physiological study of migratory birds in Assam
 - iv. Dr. D. R. Singh, Director, ICAR, Sikkim for access to bio-resources (study/survey of Orchid Germplasms) of Assam.
- b. Expenditure incurred during 4th Quarter (from 1st January – 31st March 2015)
- i. State Grant: Rs 8,98,317/-
 - ii. NBA Grant : Rs 2,63,678/-

8. Following additional issues were discussed and decision taken:

- a. **Linkages between PBR and Working Plans:** The APCCF (RE & WP) mentioned about the requirement for assessment of biodiversity in Working Plans as per the new Working Plan Code. It was agreed that joint field-units comprising of facilitators of PBRs of the Board and that of Forest Department could be formed for carrying out biodiversity assessment. The data of PBRs and Working Plans may be shared.
- b. **International Day for Biological Diversity:** The Board was informed that this year's IBD day will be celebrated on 22nd May at Jeypore Reserve Forest IB, Dibrugarh. It was further informed that competitive events for local school children will be organized and also a brochure on the theme "Biodiversity for sustainable Development" will be released during the event. Member Secretary invited all the members present in the meeting to the event.
- c. **Documentation of Traditional Knowledge:** The Board was of the view that a coordinated study be commissioned for documentation of traditional knowledge, as it is not getting enough mention in the PBRs. The outcome of such a study could in turn supplement the PBRs.

- d. **Interest accrued on grants:** The Board was informed that the grant for PBR preparation was being released in installments depending upon the progress in the field. The balance fund with the account of the Board has accrued some interest. The proposal to use this interest amount towards audit , taxes, contingencies and miscellaneous works related to PBR exercises was approved by the Board.
- e. **Local conveyance for Dak-Runner:** the Board agreed to the proposal for providing local conveyance to the Dak-Runner.
9. Dr. Aparajita De, Expert Member of the Board made a presentation on progress of PBR preparation of Borjalenga BMC in Barak Valley by engaging facilitator under BRAP. The Members appreciated the efforts and suggested to extend this approach for preparation of more PBRs in Barak Valley. Dr. Aparajita acknowledged the cooperation she has been receiving from the Forest Department officers and field staff in this exercise. Her request for engagement of 2 fellows under BRAP for Borjalenga BMC was agreed to.
10. The date and venue for the next Board meeting shall be intimated in due course..

The Meeting ended with thanks from the Chair to everyone present.

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(Member Secretary-ASBB)

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(PCCF-Assam)

Annexure-1**List of members present in the 14th Meeting of Assam State Biodiversity Board : 30th April, 2015**

Sr. No	Name	Designation	Contact No.	E-mail Id
Official Members				
1	A. K. Johari, IFS	Member Secretary- ASBB	8876565345	johari60@yahoo.com
Ex- Officio Members				
2	R. C. Goswami, IFS (Retd.)	Member-ASBB	9435044818	rcgoswami37@gmail.com
3	Dr. Aparajita De	Member- ASBB	9435579520	aparajitadehajra@gmail.com
4	Dr. P. C. Bhattacharjee	Member- ASBB	9435148702	bhattapc@gmail.com
5	Dr. Anil Kr. Goswami	Member- ASBB	9864021714	akgoswami@gmail.com
Special Invitees				
6	D. Mathur, IFS	PCCF & HoFF- Assam,	9435525094	pccfassam@gmail.com
7	Md. M. U. Ahmed	Commissioner & Secretary- A H & Veterinary Dept.	9435046600	mahtabahmd@gmail.com
8	Dr. A. Choudhury, IAS	Secy. – Secretariat Administrative Dept.	9435079376	acbadru56@gmail.com
9	Dr. R. M. Dubey, IFS	Chairman, Pollution Control Board- Assam	9435067690	rudramanidubey@yahoo.com
10	Dr. Ranjana Gupta, IFS	Addl. PCCF- (Wetlands)	8876565344	ranjanagupta2001@yahoo.com
11	Dr. Alka Bhargava, IFS	Addl. PCCF - (REWP)	9435568923	alka_b87@yahoo.com