

Report on

Attending the 40th Gram Sabha of Labing- Gerethang GPU,

West Sikkim

For the constitution of Biodiversity Management Committee

Sikkim State Biodiversity Board
Department of Forests, Environment and Wildlife Management
Government of Sikkim
23.09.2014

Venue

Gerethang Village Administrative Centre
West Sikkim

40th Gram Sabha was organised for Labing Gerethang GPU,at Gerethang, Vikas Administrative Centre. It was chaired by Hon'ble Area MLA, Shri Sonam Dadul Bhutia. The occasion was also graced by the presence of Zilla Up adhyaksha, West, shri Laxuman Kafley. Other representations included, Panchayat President, Smt. Lisha Subba, Panchayat secretary,shri Sant Kr. Subba, Panchayat Members, VAC employees. Line departments included CMO Yuksam, BDO Yuksam, RMDD personnel, Headmistress of Gerethang JHS and Sikkim Biodiversity Board.The board members included Mrs. Usha Lachungpa, Additional dir, SBB cum State Project co-ordinator, (UNEP-GEF-MoEF-ABS),Ms. Shewani Pradhan, ACF, SBB and Dr. Bharat Pradhan,Technical-cum-Scientific Assistant (UNEP-GEF-MoEF-ABS). The GPU was represented by locals of the 6 wards namely: Upper Gerethng, Tamatam, Lower Gerethang, Upper Labing, Middle Labing and Lower Labing.



The programme started with offering of Khada in photoframe of the “Father of the Nation”, followed by welcome address by Panchayat Secretary. Various agendas were discussed under Labing



Gerethang GPU which was co-ordinated by Panchayat Secretary and resolutions were passed.

land races, folk varieties and cultivars, domesticated stocks and breeds of animals and microorganisms. She also talked about the invasive species that come from outside and invade our land thus destroying the habitat of our indigenous floras and sometimes even leading to spread of diseases.

Dr. Pradhan, gave brief introduction on the need for organizing such programme and talked about the history on the development of the conservation concepts, various existing national and international acts/rules framed for the conservation of biodiversity, etc. The participants were also enlightened about the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the three important goals of CBD,



and the initiative taken by the Indian Government for biodiversity conservation, as one of the signatory to the CBD, such as formulation of the Indian Biological Diversity Act, 2002. Further, they were informed that the BD Act, 2002 do not restrict them like other Indian Acts such as Indian Forest Act, 1927, Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, etc. which focuses mainly on the

biodiversity conservation but told the participants that in addition to conservation of biodiversity, the

BD Act (2002) also talks about their sustainable use and the Access and Benefit Sharing provisions which will help them in earning sustainable livelihood by using their traditional knowledge on the use, conservation, etc. of natural and genetic resources as well as retaining the Intellectual Property Right (IPR) of an individual or community. He further mentioned about the different agencies like National Biodiversity Board and State Biodiversity Board at the national and regional level to implement the BD Act, 2002 and the need for the formation of the Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) at the local level. He highlighted that the role of the NBA and SBBs are to see that the concerned villages and the villagers through local BMCs get full benefit of their traditional knowledge, natural resources, etc. by acting as a mediator between them and the organizations who are trying to use or already using their resources for commercial benefits by making them sign an ABS agreement.



Miss Shewani talked about the necessity to form BMCs in every GPU level under biological diversity Act 2002. The participants were informed about the processes involved in the formation of the committee, its composition, member's selection criteria, tenure of BMC, etc. It was specifically mentioned by

her that the BMC members can be anyone from the existing EDC or JFMC or community provided they have sound traditional knowledge about the use practices of the natural / genetic / biological resources and also having familiarity in identification of the resources whether it be plants or animals or any other. She emphasized that the members should be drawn from amongst the traditional healers (*Amchis, Vaidhyas*, etc.), NTFP collectors, fishermen, academicians, etc. because their responsibilities includes promotion of biodiversity conservation, their sustainable use, preparation of documents like People's Biodiversity Register (PBR) which will be their sole property to claim their IPR, etc., preservation of habitats, conservation of land races, folk varieties and cultivars, domesticated stocks of breeds and animals, management of Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHSs) like sacred grooves, sacred water bodies, sacred trees/animals, etc. and they should be the local residents possessing the Sikkim

Subject Certificate or Certificate of Identification. It was also informed by her to the participants that the NBA will provide a start-up grant through SBB for BMC constitution, office set-up, etc. nevertheless, they should continuously provide feedback to the SBBs in the matter of traditional knowledge and biodiversity related issues. It was followed by the Nomination and selection of members for BMC.

Panchayat Secretary, Shri Sant. Kr. Subba was appointed as the chairperson of the committee. Shri keshav Chettri, Range officer (KNP) will be the ex officio Member Secretary.

Sl No	Name of members	Designation
1	Sant Kumar Subba	Chairperson
2	Keshav Chettri	Member Secretary
3	Lisha Limboo	Member (Female)
4	Kumar Limboo	Member
5	Shiva Luitel	Member
6	Ruplal Biswakarma	Member
7	Neelu chettri	Member (Female)

After the open house discussion on the various proposals placed, the programme ended with Vote of Thanks proposed by Panchayat President.