

Report on

**One Day GPU Level Awareness Programme on Biological Diversity Act,
2002 and the Role of Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC)**

Under the

UNEP-GEF-MoEF-ABS Project

**Strengthening the Implementation of the Biological Diversity Act and
Rules with focus on its Access and Benefit Sharing provisions**

Organized By

**Sikkim State Biodiversity Board
Department of Forests, Environment and Wildlife Management
Government of Sikkim
30.09.2014**

Venue

**Passingdang Saffu
North Sikkim**

**One Day GPU Level Awareness Programme on
Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and the Role of BMC**

Date: 30.09.2014

Venue: Passindang GVK.

Report of Tour Program of visit to Passingdang for constitution of Passingdang Saffu BMC on 30.09.2014

A “**One Day GPU Level Awareness Programme on Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and the Role of Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC)**” was organized by the Sikkim State Biodiversity Board at Passingsdang GPK on 30.09.2014. The programme was attended by over 80 participants including Zilla Member, Shri Choda Lepcha, Panchayat President, Smt Pem Lhamu Lepcha, Panchayat Secretary Shri Ugen Lepcha, Panchayat Members. The Sikkim SBB was represented by Mrs. Usha Lachungpa, Additional director, Sikkim Biodiversity Board, Ms. Shewani Pradhan, ACF, SBB and Dr. Bharat Kumar Pradhan, Technical/ Scientific Assistant, (UNEP-GEF-MoEF-ABSv Project) SBB. The important part of the programme included the lecture on the “**Biodiversity and its importance**” by Mrs. Usha Lachungpa, “**Biological Diversity Act, 2002**” by Dr. Bharat Kumar Pradhan and “**The Roles of BMCs**” by Miss Shewani Pradhan.

The program started with Welcome address by Panchayat President, where she expressed her gratitude towards the forest department for organizing such program.

Mrs. Usha Lachungpa talked about biodiversity and its importance. She defined biodiversity as not only the flora and fauna but also habitats, 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. The brain drain method adapted by the foreign



researcher was also highlighted wherein they take away all the traditional knowledge from the locals and the locals are deprived of any kind of benefits arising out of that knowledge. She highlighted the need for formation of BMC and about the access and benefit sharing where they will have the right to

guard their bio-resources and enjoy the benefit sharing in case of any kind of access of bio-resources made by company or researchers. With the advancement of technology, and disappearing traditions she emphasized on the need to document all traditional knowledge and the necessity to pass on the knowledge to younger generation to preserve our rich culture and heritage.



Dr. Pradhan, gave brief introduction on the need for organizing such awareness 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.

The programme was followed by the open house discussion and constitution of BMC. Members were nominated from various wards under Passingdang saffu GPU. The members unanimously selected by participants are as follows:

Ugen Lepcha, Panchayat Secretary, was appointed as the chairperson of the committee. Shri Karma Lepcha, Range officer (KNP) will be the ex officio Member Secretary. The details are as follows:

SI No	Name of members	Designation
1	Ugen Lepcha	Chairpersom
2	Karma Wangyal Lepcha (R.O./KNP)	Member Secretary
3	Nimcho Lepcha	Member
4	Passang doma	Member
5	Namgyal Lepcha	Member
6	Dawa Lepcha	Member
7	NimZey Lepcha	Member

Later dissemination materials including Posters of Rhododendrons and Flyers on Biological Diversity Act,2002 and role of BMCs were provided.

The programme ended with Vote of Thanks by Smt. Pem Lhamu Lepcha, Panchayat President.



PASSINGDANG SAFFO BMC MEMBERS (1st row)