

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
11.09.2014**

Venue

**Yuksam GPK
West Sikkim**

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

Date: 11.09.2014

Venue: Yuksam GPK

Programme Schedule

10:30-11:30	Registration of the participants	
11:30-11:45	Welcome address	Shri B.H. Subba, Panchayat President
11:45-12:00	Lecture on Biodiversity and its importance	Mrs. Usha Lachungpa Addl. Dir, SBB
12:00-12:15	Lecture on Biological Diversity Act 2002 and its importance	Dr. Bharat Kumar Pradhan Technical/ Scientific Assistant (UNEP-GEF-MoEF ABS Project)
12:15-12:30	Tea Break	
12:30-12:45	Lecture on Role of BMC	Ms. Shewani Pradhan ACF, SBB
12:45-01:30	Open discussion and constitution of BMC	
1:30-1:45	Vote of Thanks	Shri B.H. Subba, Panchayat President
	Lunch	

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 Yuksam Dubdi GPU on 11.09.2014. The programme was attended by over 80 participants including Panchayat President Shri B.H. Subba, Panchayat Secretary, Smt. Dichen Wangchuk ,KCC President, Shri Pema Gyaltzen Bhutia,Kinzong Bhutia,KCC member, U.T. Bhutia, KCC member. 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.

Shri B.H. Subba welcomed the house and expressed his gratefulness to the Forest Department and also thanked the board members for arranging such awareness programme and expressed hope that the programme will surely benefit the local people in the longer run.

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

- A. The locals shared the information wherein they are already filling up the Peoples biodiversity register and already 185 species have been entered in the register.
- B. Some of the agendas discussed and put up by KCC member, Shri Kinzong Bhutia is as follows:
 1. All research permit to insert a clause where it is mandatory for them to consult the respective BMCs to carry out their work.
 2. A system of scot was suggested wherein the scot will remain with the scholars during their field visit to check their activities. The fooding and lodging of scot to be borne by the researcher.
 3. He suggested the appointment of JFMC and EDC members as the Member Secretary of BMC for the smooth functioning.

C. An elderly villager shared his experiences as bone healer and expressed the fear over the vanishing tradition. He suggested setting up of an institution wherein he could pass on his knowledge to the younger generation. In turn he could be provided with the monthly honorarium. As such the knowledge would be conserved without affecting his livelihood.

After the open house discussion, Yuksam Dubdi BMC was constituted by the nomination and selection of the members. Members were nominated from various wards under Yuksam Dubdi GPU. The members unanimously selected by Gram Sabha are as follows:

Panchayat Secretary, Smt. Dichen Wangchuk was appointed as the chairperson of the committee. Shri Keshav chettri, Range officer (KNP) will be the ex officio Member Secretary. Other members include:

Sl No	Name of members	Designation
1	Birkha Mann Subba	Member
2	Ms. Tshering Uden Bhutia	Member/Female
3	Ms. Sunita subba	Member /Female
4	Prem Lall Sharma	Member
5	Indra bahadur shankar	Member /SC



It was suggested to the members to constitute an advisory group comprising the elderly villagers to facilitate the BMC members in their future endeavour. 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 B.H. Subba, Panchayat President.