



Jammu and Kashmir Biodiversity Council

Agenda

for

3rd Meeting of Jammu and Kashmir (UT)

Biodiversity Council

on

08.04.2022

Under

The Chairmanship Of

Dr. Mohit Gera, IFS

Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests/Head of Forest Force

Jammu and Kashmir (UT)&

Chairman, J&K Biodiversity Council

J&K Biodiversity Council

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AGENDA

3rd Meeting of Jammu and Kashmir (UT)

Biodiversity Council

08.04.2022

Agenda 3.1

Acceptance/ Approval of Minutes of second meeting of J&K Biodiversity Council held on 5th October, 2021 at Van Bhawan/ Seikhabagh, Jammu/ Srinagar.

The minutes were circulated Vide No. JKUT/BC/Meeting/2021-22/371-81 dated: 11/10/2021 and are placed before the Committee for approval.

Agenda 3.2

Action taken on the decisions of Second meeting of J&K Biodiversity Council

S. No	Agenda Item	Meeting Decisions	Action Taken
2.1	Acceptance/ Approval of Minutes of first meeting of J&K Biodiversity Council held on 25 th February, 2021 at Van Bhawan, Jammu.	The minutes of first meeting of J&K Biodiversity Council held on 25-02-2021 were approved by the esteemed members of the Council.	Minutes circulated vide No. JKUT/BC/Meeting/2020-21/81-92 dated:-08.03.2021 were confirmed.
2.2	Action taken on the decisions of First meeting of J&K Biodiversity Council	The members took a note of the action taken and progress made on the decisions of first meeting of the Council and expressed their satisfaction.	-
2.3	Development of City Biodiversity Index for Jammu and Srinagar cities	The members appreciated the initiative of the Council and very good progress made towards development of City Biodiversity Index for smart cities of Jammu & Srinagar.	The City Biodiversity Index's prepared for both Srinagar and Jammu Cities were released on 21 st March 2022, during the celebration of International day of Forests.
2.4	Development of Local Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (LBSAP) for Jammu and Srinagar cities	The members took a note of the progress and appreciated the initiative of the Council on preparation of LBSAP for smart cities of Jammu & Srinagar.	The first Stakeholder consultation meeting for LBSAP was organised on 18 th August, 2021 in Jammu and 23 rd August, 2021 in Srinagar. The Second meeting is likely to be scheduled in April, 2022 as informed by ICLEI-South Asia.

S. No	Agenda Item	Meeting Decisions	Action Taken
2.5	Biodiversity Conservation Strategy & Action Plan for J&K	The members took a note of progress made towards J&K Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan and expressed Satisfaction.	For evaluation of the draft submitted by Celestial Earth, a Committee was constituted by J&K Biodiversity Council headed by Sh. A.K Goyal, former Special Secretary, GoI. The draft document is expected to be finalized by 31.03.2022 and forwarded to the Govt. by 15 th April, 2022.
2.6	Organizing UT level events on creation of awareness in biodiversity conservation	The members suggested for a workshop preferably for 2-3 days covering different aspects of Biodiversity with the involvement of BMCs and line departments. Apart from the UT level events, trainings would be organized by taking help from the three training schools of J&K forest department for awareness creation. Dr. C.M Seth informed that the committee constituted for Training & Awareness will submit its report shortly.	During the financial year 2021-22 several trainings were conducted which include training of JRFs, Rehbar-e-Janglat officials, Forest Guard trainees of all the training schools. In addition, training was also conducted by Principal Soil Conservation Training School for the officials of Forest Department on ABS, BD Act and Peoples Biodiversity Registers (PBRs). The UT level trainings as well as Awareness programmes shall be organised in the FY, 2022-23 across J&K.
2.7	Official involvement of Territorial DFOs as nodal officers of J&K Biodiversity Council of respective division	It was decided that Territorial DFOs will be officially involved in J&K Biodiversity Council. A proposal shall be drafted for nominating the territorial DFOs as Ex-Officio Assistant Member Secretaries by J&K Biodiversity Council for operationalization of ABS mechanism in their respective jurisdiction and also act as Nodal Officers of J&K Biodiversity Council for all biodiversity related activities for concerned Forest Divisions as per the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and Biological Diversity Rules 2004.	A proposal to nominate DFOs as Ex-Officio Assistant Member Secretaries was sent to PCCF office. The case was returned with following observation. <i>“As per the rule it is not clear how appointment of DFO (T) as Assistant Member Secretary is being proposed. In View of the above it is proposed to return the proposal to Member Secretary, Biodiversity Council J&K with the request to come up with detailed fresh proposal”.</i> The file is being examined and a proposal as per the rules shall be submitted afresh.
2.8	Mechanism for sustainable utilization of NTFPs.	The members appreciated the action taken by Forest Department on de-regulation of NTFP and its sustainable collection and utilization through BMCs and expressed satisfaction.	The matter is being pursued by the Forest Department and a mechanism is yet to be finalized.

S. No	Agenda Item	Meeting Decisions	Action Taken
2.9	Operationalization of ABS mechanism in J&K.	It was decided to seek the help of the department of industries to get the list of companies using biological resources as the raw material and information on the quantity utilized per year. To begin with, DIC Jammu and DIC Srinagar be approached for the requisite data. It was also decided that some experts may also be engaged to collect information related to the Operationalization of ABS mechanism in UT of J&K. A proposal may also be sent to have some funds that could be utilized for the purpose.	The J&K Biodiversity Council issued “Notice for Compliance” which was published in leading newspapers on 05.10.2021 & 16.11.2021 regarding the compliance to BD Act. As on date no industry approached the Council in this regard. In addition, the details of industries utilizing biological resources have been sought from DICs of Jammu/ Kashmir regions and responses have been received from DIC Kathua, DIC Rajouri, DIC Samba and DIC, Reasi only so far.
2.10	Approval for Publication of a Book on Biodiversity on Dogri Language	The compilation of book on Biodiversity of J&K in local language by the esteemed member of Council, Sh. Om Praksah Sharma, IFS (Retd.) was appreciated by all the esteemed members. It was decided that before deciding on the mode of publication, the Council must consult copyright rules for such publications as may be the case with other SBBs/UTBCs across India, and follow the same. The decision on publication of the book could be taken accordingly.	The book has been published after seeking approval for retaining the copyright rules. The same is expected to be released on 22 nd May 2022.
2.11	Any other Agenda to be raised by the esteemed members.	Promotion of Pipal and Bargad trees on the line of Chinar and documentation of sacred groves and religious places close to / adjoining the forest area for Biodiversity Conservation was also discussed at the end and members supported the move.	The same is being pursued by the Forest department and JKFRRI.

Agenda3.3

Approval for draft Jammu & Kashmir Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

The 'Jammu & Kashmir Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan' aims to establish a general frame work as per the National Biodiversity Authority guidelines on current and future policies on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem resources of Jammu & Kashmir.

The task of preparation of Biodiversity Conservation Strategy & Action plan has been assigned to "The Celestial Earth". The first draft report submitted by the agency was reviewed during the Stakeholders consultation Meeting held on 28th August, 2021 at Srinagar during which the experts from the Biodiversity Council, Forest Department, other line departments, different Universities / Institutions and other spheres of activity gave their valuable inputs to update the document. The document was accordingly updated and submitted by the "*The Celestial Earth*" on 29.11.2021.

For evaluation of the draft submitted by "*The Celestial Earth*", a Committee was constituted by J&K Biodiversity Council headed by Sh. A.K Goyal, former Special Secretary, GoI with Sh. Nazir Ahmad Zeerak, Dr. Sushil Verma, Sr. Anzar A. Khuroo, Dr. Vineeta Sharma and Sh. Parvaiz Shagoo as members. The final draft document is at the final stage of completion and is expected to be finalized by 4th April, 2022 and circulated to the esteemed members.

The draft J&K Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan is placed before the Council for approval.

Agenda 3.4

Approval of draft MoU

A master draft MoU text has been prepared for execution of MoUs with SKUAST-J, SKUAST-K, IIM Jammu, BGSBU Rajouri, Jammu University and Kashmir University. The draft text has to be in line with the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and rules made there under. The copy of draft MoU is enclosed as Annexure-I.

The draft MoU text is placed before the Council for approval.

Agenda 3.5

Operationalization of BMCs & Opening of Bank Accounts

After constituting all the BMCs in the Jammu & Kashmir UT, operationalization of BMCs has been undertaken by opening bank accounts of 75 BMCs. As on date 45 BMCs have opened bank accounts and remaining BMCs are also in the process of opening bank accounts. An amount of Rs. 15 Lacs has been sanctioned by NBA for operationalization / activation of BMCs and it is expected that the same shall be revalidated during the FY-2022-23. The sanctioned amount shall be utilized for creating awareness within the BMCs, and several other activities including printing of PBRs. In view of large number of BMCs and a meagre amount in hand, the members may like to suggest and decide on utilization of this amount as well as future course of action for operationalization of BMCs in terms of BD Act and Rules.

The Agenda is placed before the Council for deliberations / decision.

Agenda 3.6

Status of ABS in UT of Jammu & Kashmir

The Central Government has issued the guidelines on Access to Biological Resources and Associated Knowledge & Benefit Sharing Regulations, 2014 to streamline the Access Benefit Sharing (ABS) issues. As per the BD Act, 2002, non-Indian entities who wish to use the biological resources of the nation have to get mandatory approvals under section 3 of the Act from National Biodiversity Authority. Similarly, Indian entities have to mandatorily inform respective SBBs/ UTBCs under section 7 and follow the ABS regulations, 2014. The provisions of the act are strictly applicable for traders and manufacturers who use bio resources under Section 3 and 7 of BD Act.

Steps are being taken to activate ABS mechanism in J&K. The Council has issued a “Notice for Compliance” in leading newspapers under Sec 7 of Biodiversity Act, 2002 and Rule 14 of Biodiversity Rules 2004 and has given the time of 03 months for the said compliance. The Notice was published twice in the newspapers i.e on 05.10.2021 & 16.11.2021 for intimating in prescribed format to J&K Biodiversity Council for accessing the Biological resources. Till date no entity has approached the Council for compliance under Section 7 & 24 of BD Act, 2002.

The Council may deliberate and decide on the further steps to be taken for operationalizing of ABS mechanism in J&K as per the Biodiversity Act, 2002 and Rules made there under in this regard. In addition, the details of industries utilizing biological resources has been sought from DICs of Jammu/ Kashmir regions and responses have been received from DIC Kathua, DIC Rajouri, DIC Samba and DIC Reasi only so far.

The Agenda is placed before the Council for information/deliberations and decisions on future course of action.

Agenda 3.7

City Biodiversity Index of Smart Cities of Jammu & Srinagar

The Jammu and Kashmir Biodiversity Council developed City Biodiversity Index (CBI) for Jammu and Srinagar Cities with support from ICELI South-Asia, with the financial support from UNDP. The City Biodiversity Index of smart cities of Jammu & Srinagar was released on International Day for Forests i.e 21st March, 2022 by the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of UT of Jammu & Kashmir. The objective of CBI is to enable the city administrators to better understand how they can improve their biodiversity conservation efforts over time in response to the request of the J&K Biodiversity Council. Very few cities in India have developed the City Biodiversity Index. With development of the same, Jammu and Srinagar cities have become 9th and 10th cities which have developed City Biodiversity Index. In addition, the development of the City Biodiversity Index will also help to improve the score of Jammu and Srinagar cities in the Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework. The results will also help Srinagar and Jammu cities to improve the native biodiversity, ecosystem services provided by biodiversity, and governance and management of biodiversity. This will in turn help to augment urban services, thereby improving overall quality of life in the city.

The copies of CBI of Jammu and Srinagar are placed before the Council for information (Enclosed as Annexure-II & III).

Agenda3.8

Terms and conditions for hiring of JRFs by J&K Biodiversity Council in line with NBAs Internship programme.

At present J&K Biodiversity Council has engaged 06 JRFs (03 each in Jammu / Kashmir region) for updation of Peoples Biodiversity Register (PBRs) by personally visiting the panchayats allotted to them by J&K Biodiversity Council. Besides, the work on e-dashboard has also been assigned to these JRFs. The J&K Forest Research Institute being the host organization for J&K UTBC engages these JRFs for Biodiversity Council at a stipend of Rs.16000/- per month. An increase in the monthly stipend is recommended from existing Rs.16000/- per month to Rs.22500/- per month as the Junior Research Fellows have to incur sizeable expenditure on travelling to far off BMCs. In many cases the candidates often need to stay at these locations and make arrangements for their food and accommodation which becomes more expensive. In order to cover the additional expenses, it is proposed to increase the stipend from Rs.16000/- per month to Rs 22500/- per month in line with 3rd Biodiversity Samrakshan Intership Programme (BSIP) 2021-22 of NBA & UNDP (Enclosed as Annexure-IV) wherein the interns engaged for similar activities are being paid an amount of Rs.22500/- per month. It is further proposed that the Council may decide on the norms to be followed for future engagement of JRFs and other staff by the Council for various activities on temporary basis.

The Agenda is placed before the Council for deliberations and approval.

Agenda 3.9

Release of website of J&K Biodiversity Council

J&K Biodiversity Council has developed its own website which is ready for release. The esteemed members may like to comment on the website and suggest on its improvement, if any. The link of the new website shall be shared with the members for the needful.

The members may like to approve the website.

Agenda 3.10

Training of District / Block / Village level and ULB level BMCs

After the constitution of J&K Biodiversity Council vide Govt. Order No.815-JK (GAD) of 2020 dated 02.09.2020 a number of activities have been initiated for the implementation of Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and Rules 2004. All the BMCs stand constituted and PBRs have

also been prepared for all the local bodies. However, there is lack of awareness about the BD Act, 2002 and the functioning of BMCs among the members as well as the field staff. The J&K Biodiversity Council has made efforts in this regard and is also in the process of operationalization of BMCs during which awareness programmes shall also be organised. To begin with, trainings shall be conducted at the UT level followed by training at District, ULB, Block and Village level. For this, the services of the three training schools of Forest Department shall be utilized. The training will be conducted offline as well as on virtual mode.

The Agenda is placed before the Council for deliberations and advise.

Agenda 3.11

Any other Agenda to be raised by the esteemed members.