



Jammu & Kashmir Biodiversity Council

Jammu Office:
JKFRI Complex, Janipur,
Jammu (180007)

Srinagar Office:
JKFRI-Complex, near Woodland School Sonwar,
Srinagar (J&K)-190001
Ph: 0194-2468820, 0194-2465213

e-mail: jkutbc-20@jk.gov.in / jkutbc@gmail.com

Record Note of the internal meeting held under the Chairmanship of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF) / Chairman, J&K Biodiversity Council Sh. Roshan Jaggi, IFS held on 06-09-2023, to review the progress of J&K Biodiversity Council through virtual Mode.

The following officers attended the meeting:-

1. Sh. B.M. Sharma, Director JKFRI/Member Secretary J&K Biodiversity Council.
2. Sh. Mudasir Mehmood Malik, DFO Bandipora (Nodal Officer NTFP) Kashmir Region.
3. Sh. Vijay Kumar, DFO Marwah (Nodal Officer NTFP) Jammu Region.
4. Ms. Mehnaz Anjum Malik, DFO Seed Development Division, Jammu
5. Sh. Rakesh Abrol, DFO Research Forest Division, Jammu.
6. Sh. Mohammad Lateef Bhat, DFO, Research Forest Division, Srinagar
7. Sh. Munshi Iqbal, DFO Seed Development Division, Srinagar.
8. Sh. Parvaiz Ahmad Shagoo, Technical Officer, O/o PCCF(HoFF).
9. Dr. Syed Tariq, I/c Biodiversity Cell, Srinagar
10. Sh. Shashi Kant Seth, I/c Biodiversity Cell, Jammu.
11. Sh. Arun Sharma, Website Administrator, O/o PCCF(HoFF).

At the onset, the Member Secretary J&K Biodiversity Council welcomed the Chairman Biodiversity Council / PCCF (HoFF) J&K, all other participants, and briefed the Chair about recent amendments in Biological Diversity Act 2002, which was followed by Power Point presentation on (a) Action Taken report on decisions taken in the meeting held on 08.07.2023, by the Member Secretary, (b) Amendments in Biodiversity Act 2002, by Sh. Parvaiz Ahmad Shagoo, and (c) NTFP policy implementation by Nodal Officers.

After threadbare discussion on various issues as per agenda and on account of recent amendments in the Act, the following decisions have been taken by the Chairman J&K Biodiversity Council, for implementation in letter and spirit.

1. Updation of PBRs:-

For updation of the pending PBRs, three Junior Research Fellows (JRFs) engaged for each region, are required to be provided proper logistic support during field visits. The Member Secretary shall request both the regional heads of Forest department to issue directions to the DFOs (Territorial) to provide all the logistic support to JRFs when visiting BMCs. The tour programme

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of JRFs shall be meticulously designed in advance and under prior intimation to the concerned DFO(T), and the efforts must be made to cover maximum BMCs in an area during tour. Further, the Member Secretary JKBC was also advised to explore the possibility of more funding from National Biodiversity Authority under the Head "Updation of PBRs" so that more JRFs could be engaged for early completion of the updation of PBRs.

2. *Printing of PBRs:-*

The printing of pending PBRs should also be taken up immediately, moment the funds are released by the NBA, a reminder in this regard be issued to the National Biodiversity Authority to expedite release of funds in this regard.

3. *Constitution of District Level BMCs:-*

It was apprised that the constitution of District Level BMCs for the districts of Reasi, Ganderbal, Baramulla and Anantnag is still pending due to lack of response from the respective DDC chairpersons. The Chair directed DFO Seed Development Jammu, DFOs Seed Development and Research Srinagar to take help from the concerned DFOs(T) and ensure that the constitution of Committees for pending four Districts is done at the earliest.

4. *Operationalization of BMCs:-*

The Member Secretary JKBC apprised about the issues faced during opening of the bank accounts of 75 BMCs that were proposed to be operationalized in the previous financial year. He informed that till date only 41 accounts have been opened and it has been observed that in many BMCs, the Secretary is not from the permanent Government establishment as advised in the BMC Operational Guidelines and same needs to be clarified.

The Chair directed to follow the guidelines and ensure that the custody of funds in the BMC accounts remains jointly with the Chairperson of the BMC and the Secretary (belonging to a permanent establishment), preferably village level worker / Panchayat Secretary, who also operates funds of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department, jointly with the Sarpanch of the Panchayat. The PCCF/HoFF also directed to take up the matter with Govt. for accord of permission for opening of such joint accounts for pending BMCs on the lines of joint account of Panchayats in the same branch of J&K Bank.

5. *Formulation of proposal for allocation of Staff:-*

The Chair advised the Member Secretary JKBC to submit a proposal for allocation of staff from Forest Department for J&K Biodiversity council, so that functioning of Biodiversity Council is improved.

6. *Signing of MOUs:-*

It was apprised that the MoUs between BGBSU-Rajouri, SKUAST-J and J&K FRI for collaborative working in the field of Biodiversity have been signed till date. The signing of MoU with Jammu University is at its final stage. The Chairman directed to ensure the MoUs with the

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remaining Universities/ Institutes are taken up with the concerned and finalized at the earliest without any further delay. The objective of signing the MoUs need to be realized by acting on the agreed collaborative works as mentioned in the respective MoUs.

7. *Status of Biodiversity Heritage Sites:-*

The Member Secretary JKBC informed about the decisions taken in the meeting held by the sub-group constituted for the purpose on 06.07.2023, wherein the members suggested to include JKFRI Preservation Plots, Research Plots of Kashmir University at different locations, prominent Sacred Groves among others for nomination as Biodiversity Heritage Sites as per guidelines. The PCCF/HoFF directed to finalize the list and submit a proposal so that the same could be sent for approval/declaration.

8. *Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan:-*

The Member Secretary JKBC informed about the meeting held for the finalization of BSAP with all the DFOs, representative of Celestial Earth and others on 29-08-2023. All the DFOs of JKFRI and other participants were advised to submit feedback after examining the Draft BSAP submitted by "The Celestial Earth". The feedback has been accordingly submitted by all the DFOs and participants. The Chair advised to go through the feedback and ensure the changes, wherever necessary, are incorporated at the earliest so that the final document can be sent to the Administrative Department for approval.

Besides above, on the presentation by the Nodal Officers NTFP i.e. DFO Marwah and DFO Bandipora regarding implementation of NTFP policy, the PCCF(HoFF) has further issued the following directions:-

- (i) Wider dissemination of information through IEC activities related to the new NTFP policy viz-a-viz mechanism for sustainable collection of NTFPs and involvement of BMCs for livelihood of rural masses. Attn: - NOs DFO Marwah and Bandipora
- (ii) The details of traders registered by DFOs under provisions of SO 82 dt.02/03/2023, be published in print media for information of all concerned, especially BMCs. Attn:-NOs DFO Marwah and Bandipora
- (iii) In order to encourage the cultivation of medicinal plants, a mechanism to be devised for the purpose, for which comprehensive guidelines be drafted by the Nodal Officers and submitted to the PCCF(HoFF) through controlling officers. Attn:-NOs DFO Marwah and Bandipora
- (iv) The Schedule-1 of SO 82 dt. 02.03.2020, needs to be revised with addition of NTFPs and deletion of some species which are restricted for collection as per MoEFCC GoI SO 3845(E) dt. 02.08.2018. The Nodal Officers NTFP shall prepare the draft amendment in Schl. 1 and submit to the PCCF(HoFF) after getting that vetted from the JK Biodiversity Council. Attn:-NOs DFO Marwah and Bandipora

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- (v) Both the Nodal Officers shall draw a comparison on the revenue generated by auctioning of NTFPs through the previous mechanism and the new mechanism which is being operationalized on ground for collection /Trade of NTFPs as per new policy . A short documentary on the benefits of the new policy shall also be prepared.

Attnt:-NOs DFO Marwah and Bandipora

The meeting ended with the vote of thanks to the Chair.



(B.M.Sharma)

Addl. PCCF/ Member Secretary
J&K Biodiversity Council/
Director JKPRI,
Jammu & Kashmir

No:-JKUT/BC/Meeting/2023-24/ 515-24

Dated 16/09 /2023

Copy for information to:-

1. Sh. Mudasir Mehmood Malik, DFO Bandipora (Nodal Officer NTFP) Kashmir Region.
2. Sh. Vijay Kumar, DFO Marwah (Nodal Officer NTFP) Jammu Region.
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