

KARNATAKA BIODIVERSITY BOARD

Note on Biological Diversity Heritage Site

***BDA 37. Biological Diversity Heritage Sites**

1. Without prejudice to any other law for the time being in force, the State Government may, from time to time in consultation with the local bodies, notify in the Official Gazette, areas of biodiversity importance as biodiversity heritage sites under this Act.
2. The State Government, in consultation with the Central Government, may frame rules for the management and conservation of all the heritage sites.
3. The State Government shall frame schemes for compensating or rehabilitating any person or section of people economically affected by such notification.

***KBDR 20. Establishment and Management of Biodiversity Heritage Sites:**

(1) The Board shall, in consultation with the local bodies and other key stakeholders, take necessary steps to facilitate setting up of areas of significant bio-diversity values as Heritage Sites. Following recommendation from the Board and after consultation with the Central Government, the State Government shall issue notification to this effect.

Importance of Biological Diversity Heritage Sites:

Biodiversity is closely linked to ecological security. Loss of biodiversity and bio-resources are in the increasing trend and also threatened by the human activities. Therefore, it is necessary to instill and nurture conservation ethics in the community. The declaration of Biodiversity Heritage Site will ensure bringing home the values and ethics in the society and thereby protecting the environment ensuring availability of bio-resources for the present and future generations.

Definition of Biological Diversity Heritage Sites:

Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS) are well defined areas that are unique ecologically fragile ecosystems-terrestrial, freshwater or marine having rich biodiversity comprising of any one or more of the components such as; species richness, high endemism, presence of rare, endemic and threatened species, keystone species, species of evolutionary significance, wild ancestors of domestic/cultivated species or land races or their varieties, past pre-eminence of biological components represented by fossil beds and having cultural or aesthetic values.

The criteria for identification of Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS)

The BHS shall be identified in accordance with the definition above. Accordingly the following types of areas of biodiversity importance shall qualify as BHS.

- a. Areas of biodiversity importance that contain a mosaic of natural semi-natural and human made habitats, which together contain a unique diversity of life forms.
- b. Areas of biodiversity importance that contain significant domesticated biodiversity and/or representative of agro biodiversity and agro ecosystems.
- c. Areas of biodiversity importance that are of cultural significance such as sacred groves and sites, or other large community conserved areas.

- d. Areas of biodiversity importance that offer refuge or corridors for threatened and endemic fauna and flora, such as community conserved areas or urban greens and wetlands.
- e. Areas of biodiversity importance whether government, community or private shall be considered.

Process for Identification and Declaration of Biodiversity Heritage Sites.

State Biodiversity Boards (SBB) shall invite proposals (or consider those already coming from communities) for declaration of BHSs, through BMC with widespread dissemination of information among farmer/fisher/advansi associations, rural communities, NGOs, urban group, research institutions, government agencies, and other organizations, regarding the provision of BHSs, through locally appropriate print and or local media.

- a) Biodiversity Management Committees in consultation with NGOs and community institutions shall initiate proposals for declaring BHSs.
- b) SBBs shall screen the proposals based on the criteria and come up with a list of areas which shall be designated as the Biodiversity Heritage Sites.
- c) Public discussions with various sections of society with gender and social representation, in such discussions amongst the Gramsabahs, urban ward committees, and other relevant local institutions (including government institutions), regarding proposals for declaring BHSs.
- d) SBB shall move for issuing a notification through their respective state governments specifying the boundaries with proper survey of the BHS in consultation with BMC.
- e) Technical Support Group (TSG) constituted by the SBB shall facilitate the documentation, conservation and management.
- f) Final notification and announcement for declaring the BHS shall be made at the state level in an appropriate manner giving it wide media coverage particularly in the vernacular language.

Management of BHS

- a. BMC which in addition to their duties defined in the Act, shall take care of the management of each BHS.
- b. It shall be the responsibility of the BMC to prepare and implement a management plan for a period of five to ten years in consultation with SBB and with the support of TSG.

Components of the Management Plan:

The communities with support from the TSG mentioned in point No. 6 (e) above and with the help of others (if required), will prepare a management plan for the BHS, through participatory rural appraisal (PRA) methodology for implementation.

SBB will then approve the implement and final management plan.

Management Action plan shall be reviewed and modified periodically.

Monitoring of BHS:

- a. The monitoring committee(s) shall be constituted by the SBB
- b. This committee shall monitor the implementation of management plan periodically and submit a report to the SBB.
- c. The monitoring committee shall comprise of the members (not exceeding 9 individuals) chosen out of experts/knowledgeable individuals in the field of conservation.
- d. The monitoring committee shall have a life of three years before its reconstitution.

Background note for implementation of Section 37 of Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

Areas which have already been designated, identified or notified (for example as protected area, biosphere reserve, etc) under other Acts or programmes may not be considered under this provision. The idea is to identify those areas important from biodiversity point of view which do not enjoy protection/support under any other Act or programme.

Steps:

1. Formation of Biodiversity Management Committees at Gramapachayath level.
2. Resolution of Gramapanchayth for declaring Biodiversity Heritage Site.
3. Filling up of the format with details including opinion of Zilla Panchayath, Deputy Commissioner etc. complete justification for proposal should be provide.
4. Completed format with all information including Map and Photos submitted to Biodiversity Board, Karnataka.
5. Discussion in the Board Meeting
6. Submission of proposal to the Government by the Board,
7. Necessary order of the State Government.

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*BDA-Biological Diversity Act 2002

*KBDR- Karnataka Biological Diversity Rules 2005