

Report On Project Launch and Discussion Meet On
UNEP – GEF – MoEF – ABS Project On
“Strengthening the Implementation of Biodiversity Act and Rules with Focus on Its Access
and Benefit Sharing Provisions (ABS)”

The UNEP-GEF-MoEF-ABS Project on “**Strengthening the Implementation of Biodiversity Act and Rules with Focus on Its Access and Benefit Sharing Provisions (ABS)**” was launched on 2nd December 2014 at 10:30 am at The Mandovi Hall of The International Centre Goa, Dona Paula on the occasion of the 10 years completion of the Goa State Biodiversity Board.

Many well-known dignitaries made their gracious presence at the launch meeting. Smt. Alina Saldanha, Hon’ble Minister for Forest and Environment, Chairperson of Goa State Biodiversity Board; Shir. Richard D’Souza, IFS, Principal Chief Conservation of Forest; Shri. C. A. Reddy, Managing Director of Goa Forest Development Corporation; Dr. Nitin Sawant, Member Secretary of Goa State Biodiversity Board and Dr. Ishwar C. Poojar, Project Manager of UNEP-GEF-MoEF-ABS- Programme, were on the Dias during the inauguration of the Project Launch and Discussion meet. Thirty five representatives from Academic Institutions, Research Institutions, Government Departments, Stakeholders including members of the board participate in the meet. Representatives from various mass media houses also showed their presence.

Dr. Nitin Sawant, the Member Secretary of the Board welcomed the gathering and highlighted the importance of the project. He extended thanks to National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) for choosing Goa as one of the states for launching this project. He also said that the state has a unique Biodiversity which need to be conserved. He stated that with this project the benefits of the biodiversity will be shared and also awareness to avoid bio piracy will be created. He further added that under this project the identification of biodiversity and their valuation in selected ecosystem has already been undertaken phase-wise.

This was followed by lighting of the traditional lamp by the Hon’ble Minister for Forest and Environment and Chairperson of the Board Smt. Alina Saldanha, other dignitaries of the Dias, Board Members, and the District Magistrate.

Shri. C. A. Reddy, Managing Director of Goa Forest Development Corporation and former Secretary, NBA also shared his experiences on this occasion he emphasized on the importance of Biological Resource present in the state. He also declared a moment of pride for Goa being selected as the 6th state in the country for this project. He also put forth the importance of conservation and sustainable use of Biological Resource.

This was followed by a curtain raiser and launching of the project at the distinguished hands of Smt. Alina Saldanha Hon’ble Minister for Forest and Environment, Chairperson of Goa State Biodiversity Board in the presence of other dignitaries on the dias.

Thereafter, the Chairperson of the Board expressed her joy on the 10 years of completion of the Board. She also congratulated the Board for being very active in the past two and a half years. She mentioned that Goa State Biodiversity Board is documenting the Diversity and in turn also monitoring strategies to conserve its Biological Resource via Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs).

After a tea break, Dr. Ishwar C. Poojar, The Project Manager of UNEP-GEF-MoEF-ABS Project made a presentation elaborating the Biological Diversity Act 2002 and Rules 2004 and its purpose; role of National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) and Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs). He also elaborated on the exemption to the Act, Normally Traded Commodities and Tradable Biodiversity of the State.

This was followed by an interactive session where various pertinent questions were raised by the participants. Dr. Ishwar C. Poojar replied to all questions lucidly. This discussion session was fruitful and suggestion and comments from different stakeholders were received.

Thereafter, Dr. Bhiva Malik, Member, Goa State Biodiversity Board delivered the vote of thanks and The Project Launch and Discussions meet ended with a lunch by 02:30pm.

Glimpse of the “Project Launch and Discussion Meet”

