

## India, a Biodiversity Hotspot

India is one of the 17 mega-diverse countries in the world. It faces unique circumstances as well as challenges in the conservation of its rich biological heritage. With only 2.4 per cent of the world's geographical area, over 1.2 billion people co-exist with over 47,000 species of plants and 91,000 species of animals. Several among them are keystone and charismatic species. For millions of Indians, biodiversity supports their very livelihoods and ways of life. Therefore, maintaining its rich biodiversity and natural resources is essential for achieving inclusive and sustainable development.

## Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) Partnership Project

The ABS Partnership Project aims at strengthening the capacities of the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), the State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs), Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), as well as raising awareness and build the capacities of the commercial user groups of biological resources and associated knowledge for the effective implementation of ABS mechanisms under the Biological Diversity Act 2002, in keeping with India's commitments under the Nagoya

## Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS)

All living organisms; plants, animals and microbes; and the genetic material they carry could be potentially useful for developing a wide range of products and services for human benefit, such as medicines, cosmetics, food supplements, industrial enzymes, agricultural and environmental practices and techniques. The plants, animals and microbes often make up complex and delicately-balanced ecosystems which can be threatened or endangered by their exploitation for human use. Our current understanding of genetic resources owes a great deal to the traditional knowledge of local communities.

## Project Approach

The project is a technical cooperation between India and Germany and is commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) under the Indo-German Biodiversity Programme.

The project will be implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC), National Biodiversity Authority and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH with three pilot State Biodiversity Boards namely, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand.

Main intervention areas are:

- Awareness raising, communication and stakeholder dialogues for creating better understanding of the Biological Diversity Act 2002, ABS Guidelines and Nagoya Protocol on ABS amongst different actors and stakeholder groups.
- Development of good practices of benefit sharing with communities, based on utilization of biological resources for commercial or research purposes.
- Development of an IT-enabled ABS monitoring system for National Biodiversity Authority for effective monitoring of the use of biological resources in ABS processes.

The way in which genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge are accessed, and how the benefits of their use are shared, can provide incentives for their conservation and sustainable use, and can contribute to the creation of a fairer and more equitable economy to support sustainable development.

ABS refers to the way in which genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge may be accessed, and how the benefits that result from their use are shared between the people or countries using the resources (users) and the people or countries that provide them (providers).

## Project Implementation Partners

### Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India

The MoEFCC is the nodal agency in the administrative structure of the Central Government for the planning, promotion, co-ordination and overseeing the implementation of India's environmental and forestry policies and programmes.

### National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)

The NBA is a statutory and autonomous body established for implementing India's Biological Diversity Act (2002).

### State Biodiversity Board (SBB) of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand

Established under the Biological Diversity Act (2002), the SBBs regulate access to biological resources and advise the State Governments on matters related to biodiversity.

### GIZ

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is a public-benefit federal enterprise owned by the German Government that provides services worldwide in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development.



## Indo-German Biodiversity Programme

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India (MoEFCC) in partnership with GIZ is implementing the Indo-German Biodiversity Programme. Commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB), the Indo-German Biodiversity Programme comprises the following:

- The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity – India Initiative (TII)
- India Business and Biodiversity Initiative (IBBI)
- Conservation and Sustainable Management of Coastal and Marine Protected Areas
- Himachal Pradesh Forest Ecosystem Services Project
- Access and Benefit Sharing Partnership Project
- Human-Wildlife Conflict Project

