

**Case studies on India Biodiversity
Award (IBA) winning BMCs of Tripura**

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I. Back ground

India Biodiversity Awards (IBA) is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) and the United Nations Development Programme -India. It is an innovative process to identify and recognize the efforts of individuals, communities and institutions including corporate (both public and private) working towards effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of biological resources, access and benefit sharing and biodiversity governance.

The first India Biodiversity Awards were jointly announced by the MoEF&CC and UNDP in 2012 at the high level segment of the Eleventh Meeting of Conference of Parties (CoP-11) to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Following its success, the second, third, fourth and fifth cycle of India Biodiversity Awards were given in 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2021. Over 750 + good cases of Biodiversity conservation, sustainable use, access and benefit-sharing and biodiversity governance have been documented through the award process. The awards were institutionalized in the National Biodiversity Authority in 2017 and are given bi-annually. The 6th cycle of India Biodiversity Awards were announced during the celebrations of International Day of Biological Diversity (IDB) on 22nd May, 2021. The awards under the 7th IBA cycle will be given in 2023.

I. Categories of India Biodiversity Awards for the year 2018 & 2020 are summarized below:

Category	Description	Entity	No of Prize/Award 2018	No of Prize/Award 2020	Remarks
Category 1 Conservation:	<p>Conservation of Wild species:</p> <p>The award recognizes the efforts of an institution towards conservation of wild species, management and restoration of their habitats for accelerating prevalence of endangered species.</p> <p>Conservation of domesticated species:</p> <p>The award recognizes efforts of individuals and institutions towards conservation of domesticated species through effective management of habitats stimulating significant reduction in threat level. One award each will be given to individuals and institutions under this category.</p>	Individuals/ Institutions/ Enterprising BMCs	4 Prizes.	3 Prizes	

Sustainable use of Biological Resources			2 Prize	2 Prizes	The endeavors for sustainable use of biological resources and efficient natural resource management is recognized. One award each will be given to individuals and institutions under this category.
Replicable Mechanisms of Access and Benefit Sharing			1 Prize	1 Prize	The award aims at honoring individuals/ institutions whose projects augmented noteworthy monetary and/or non-monetary

					equitable sharing of benefits out of the utilization of biological resources with communities and stakeholders concerned.
Best Biodiversity Management Committee			1 Prize	1 Prize	The award aims to recognize the exemplary work of Biodiversity Management Committees in documentation of biological resources and associated traditional knowledge; generating awareness; establishing best practices in biodiversity conservation, sustainable use, social and gender equity and empowerment and equitable sharing of benefits.

***N.B. Award comprises of a cash prize, a memento and a citation.

II. Evaluation Criteria and Guidance

(Available in the NBA Website www.nbaindia.org)

III. The Process

(Available in the NBA Website www.nbaindia.org)

IV. The success story regarding achievement of IBA Award in the State of Tripura

a. Raipassa Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC), Tripura received Award under the category Replicable Mechanism for Access and Benefit Sharing.

Raipassa is the second smallest and most remote village in the Dhalai district of Tripura. The community depends on the cultivation, collection and sale of broom grass for its livelihood. The villagers collect about 50 tonnes of broom grass per season, and sell it at Rs. 22/Kg.

Realizing the economic and ecological significance of the bio-resource, the Raipassa Biodiversity Management Committee signed an agreement with commercial users. According to the agreement, 5% of the total proceeds from the sale is transferred to the Joint Forest Management Committee, responsible for collecting the resource. The BMC and the Local Biodiversity Fund share 2% of the proceeds, while 1% is transferred to the state biodiversity fund.

The BMC ensures that bio-resources of the area are traded in a manner that is both commercially and environmentally viable.

The agreement between BMC and commercial user has been signed after discussion and the issue of sustainable harvesting and availability of the resources are also taken into consideration during discussion.

The Raipassa BMC plays a major role in sustainable use of bioresources as one of the mandate tasks of this BMC is conservation of bioresources available in local area. The BMC also ensures plantation of natural bioresources by the local villagers on their private land and especially by the families who have been given the rights of cultivation over forest land under the provision of RoFR 2005.

b. Twichin Gram Bari Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC),

Tripura received award under the category of : Twichin Gram Bari Panchayat is a small village of roughly 840 hectares located in Khowai District of Tripura. Around 97% of the population in the village are tribal's. In 2015, the village community constituted its BMC to address the challenge of securing equitable local livelihood while

ensuring sustainable use of biological resources. The livelihood associated risk of human-wildlife conflict was also a key concern.

The initiative undertaken by Twichin Gram Bari BMC for implementing ABS mechanism in their village has hugely benefitted the local community as they are reliant on the use of the bio-resources to earn a decent source of income and is also prompted the need for prioritizing sustainable use of the bio-resources.

To balance the commercial use of bamboo, BMC also implemented a ban over the collection and extraction of bamboo in the village for one year which will help in the sustainable use of bioresources and also served as mitigation to the human wildlife conflict in the village.

The ban of the extraction of the bio-resources for a certain period time to allow for rejuvenation has also addressed the immediate need for mitigation of human-elephant conflict within the village. Realizing the need to minimize their dependence on forests they took on the initiative for planting bamboo shoots within the village.

The joint venture of the BMC, local JFMC and State Forest Department to fix a minimum selling price of the bioresource while working in collaboration with adjacent BMCs has also strengthened capacity and knowledge sharing on exploring other potential high value bioresource for ABS agreements and ways to conserve bioresources has proved to be a monumental step towards achieving one of the core mandates of the BD Act, 2002. Such ABS mechanisms have a good potential for replication in ecologically and culturally similar regions in North East India, where natural and anthropological landscapes converge that cause similar challenges.