



KERALA STATE BIODIVERSITY BOARD

EKAA

Environment. Kerala. Awareness. Action

Quarterly - Newsletter of the Kerala State Biodiversity Board

July-September 2024

From the Chairman's Desk

Welcome to the latest edition of the Kerala State Biodiversity Board (KSBB) newsletter. This quarter has been eventful with diverse conservation initiatives, capacity-building programs, and the recognition of exemplary efforts of the Biodiversity Management Committees in particular in biodiversity conservation across Kerala. We are proud of our focus on community-led biodiversity management projects and the increasing role of youth in our mission. Together, we are making strides toward a more happy, sustainable and bio-diverse future for the state.



Welcoming the New Chairman of KSBB

We are pleased to introduce Dr. Nadesa Panicker Anil Kumar as the new Chairman of the KSBB. With extensive expertise in biodiversity conservation and community biodiversity management across different ecosystems, Dr. Anil Kumar's leadership will guide us through a pivotal phase of integrating sustainable biodiversity management strategies into the state's Local Self-Government centered sustainable development agenda.

Kerala State Biodiversity Conservation Awards 2022 Announced

The Kerala State Biodiversity Conservation Awards for 2022 have been announced, recognizing exceptional contributions to biodiversity conservation, environmental awareness, and sustainable practices. The awards span 12 categories, including Haritha Vyakthi, Best Custodian Farmer (Plants and Animals), Best Journalist, and Best Kavu Protection. A total of 22 individuals, institutions, and organizations have been honored this year for their outstanding efforts in safeguarding Kerala's rich biodiversity.

Know Our Award Winners – Best Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)

click the link :- <https://keralabiodiversity.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Press-release-Final-31.08.2024.pdf>

State-Level LBSAP Training Workshop

On 24th July 2024, KSBB organized a state-level training on the Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (LBSAP) for Biodiversity Management Committees at Thycaud PWD Rest House, Thiruvananthapuram. The training aimed at equipping BMCs with tools to prepare local strategies for biodiversity conservation. Dr. Rathan U Kelkhar IAS who inaugurated the workshop, provided very valuable insights on enhancing participatory biodiversity planning at the grassroots level.



District Coordinators' Capacity Building Program

KSBB conducted a one-day training program for the Biodiversity District Coordinators on 25th July 2024 at Vallakadav Biodiversity Museum. The sessions focused on empowering coordinators with skills in biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of resources, and the principles of Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS). The program included hands-on training and a visit to the Natural History Museum.



Veliyankode BMC Becomes a Sea Turtle Conservation Facilitation Center

Veliyankode Panchayat's BMC in Malappuram has been officially designated as a facilitation center for sea turtle conservation, following its success in releasing over 6,000 Olive Ridley sea turtles into the wild. The BMC has been instrumental in monitoring nesting sites, conducting clean-up drives, and raising awareness. The community-driven conservation project is a model for other coastal regions.



Public Hearing for Poilkavu Sacred Grove Biodiversity Heritage Site

A public hearing was held on 2nd July 2024 at Chengottukavu Panchayat to discuss the proposal to declare Poilkavu Sacred Grove a Biodiversity Heritage Site. The grove, spanning 11.04 acres, harbors 197 plant species, including 16 listed in the IUCN Red List. The hearing was chaired by Dr. V. Balakrishnan, Member Secretary KSBB, and coordinated by BMC President Smt. SheebaMalayil, was a critical step towards ensuring the long-term protection of this ecologically significant site.



Chemmencherry BMC Honors Fishermen for Whale Rescue

In a remarkable conservation effort, Chemmencherry BMC honored local fishermen who rescued a stranded whale at Azhikal near the Korapuzha estuary. This act highlights the critical role of community members in marine conservation.



Short-Finned Pilot Whale
(*Globicephala macrorhynchus*)

Moth Week Celebration – Mokeri BMC



Mokeri BMC celebrated National Moth Week by organizing an event titled “A Night with Moths” at Rajeev Gandhi Memorial HSS. Students and BMC members identified around 20 moth species, gaining hands-on knowledge about the significance of these often-overlooked creatures in biodiversity.



Biodiversity Club Corner

- **Markus Arts and Science College**, Valanchery, hosted a seminar on biodiversity conservation on 7th September 2024. The event, attended by 80 participants, focused on biodiversity threats and the importance of traditional knowledge in conservation.
- **Model College**, Matikai, established a herbal garden with KSBB support and held an awareness session on biodiversity on 10th September 2024.
- **Chelannur BMC** organized a biodiversity quiz competition for school students, engaging participants across all levels, from LP to Higher Secondary.



Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (LBSAP) Initiatives

- **Karivellur Peralam BMC**
A training program on LBSAP preparation was conducted on 19th August 2024, focusing on community involvement and sustainable biodiversity strategies.
- **Muthuthala Panchayath BMC**
A workshop on LBSAP preparation was held on 23rd September 2024, where local leaders and stakeholders collaborated to draft a biodiversity action plan.



Prof. M.S. Swaminathan Memorial Webinar

In remembrance of Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, KSBB Chairman Dr. Nadesa Panicker Anil Kumar delivered a presentation on the synergy between BioE3 (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment, and Employment) and BioC4 (Biodiversity Conservation, Cultivation, Consumption, and Commerce) to accelerate the achievement of SDGs 2, 3, 8, 12, 13, 14, and 15.



Upcoming KSBB Events

1. Childrens day celebration - 11.00 AM, 14.11.24 @ Biodiversity Museum, Trivandrum
2. Kerala Traditional Knowledge and Digital Library- Brainstorming event - 11 AM, 15/11/2024 @ KSCSTE Pattom
3. BMC strengthening programs (Online), 16/11/2024 & 18/11/2024
4. PBR updation training (District wise) 20/11/2024- 28/12/2024
5. Kerala State Biodiversity Award Distribution- 5 PM, 11/12/2024 @ Mascot Hotel, Trivandrum
6. 16th State level Children's Biodiversity Congress - 8.30 AM, 11/12/2024 @ KTDC Mascot Hotel, Trivandrum
7. Youth Ideation Challenge - Prize distribution- 5 PM, 11/12/2024 @ Mascot Hotel, Trivandrum
8. LBSAP training, 10.00 AM, 11/12/2024, KTDC Mascot Hotel, Trivandrum
9. TSG sensitisation program, 11/12/2024, KTDC Mascot hotel, Trivandrum

Stay tuned for our Biodiversity Public Forum and Academic Seminar series that to commence from the next quarter.

Peoples Biodiversity Registers for all Ramsar Wetland Sites of Kerala

KSBB has facilitated getting prepared the People's Biodiversity Registers of all the Ramsar Sites of Kerala. India has added three new Ramsar sites, bringing the total to 85. These include the Nanjarayan and Kazhuvveli Bird Sanctuaries in Tamil Nadu and Tawa Reservoir in Madhya Pradesh, marking significant progress in the country's wetland conservation efforts.

Ozone Day Observations by KSBB

KSBB marked Ozone Day 2024 with a webinar featuring a session by Dr. M.K. Satheeshkumar Prof. Dept. of Atomic and Molecular Physics, Manipal Academy of Higher education on 'Ozone Pollution-A threat to Biodiversity'. An online quiz on ozone science saw over 3,907 participants from across the state, raising awareness about ozone protection.

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Gnetum ula, a gymnosperm (popularly known as a living fossil), is seen in Ponnakudam Kavu in Ernakulam District. Ponnakudam Kavu -The biodiversity-rich sacred grove got the ever-first award for sacred groves instituted by KSBB in 2022. (Photo credit: Sri Ponnakudam Bhagavathi Dewaswam Trust, Vadakode P.O., Kochi)