



കേരള സംസ്ഥാന ജൈവവൈവിധ്യ ബോർഡ് KERALA STATE BIODIVERSITY BOARD

A statutory and autonomous body, Government of Kerala

No. KSBB/218/2025-TA(WS)

22-08-2025

Guidelines for the project

Developing Access and Fair and Equitable Benefit-Sharing (ABS) Models through Bioprospecting of Ethnobiological Knowledge of Kerala

1. Objective

The objective is to utilize Kerala's rich ethnobiological heritage for sustainable development by establishing ABS models. The project will involve identifying promising plant species from traditional knowledge sources, validating their applications through scientific studies, and developing commercially potential products. Importantly, it aims to ensure that the benefits derived from such bioprospecting are shared fairly and equitably with indigenous and local communities, in line with national and international biodiversity laws.

2. Eligible Institutions

Institutions applying should meet the following criteria

- **Academic/research institutions/NGOs:** Recognized universities, R&D centers, NGOs or public institutions with experience in ethnobotany, molecular biology, phytochemistry, traditional medicine, or related fields.
- **Experience with community-based work:** Must have previous engagement with tribal/indigenous communities, local healers especially involving traditional knowledge systems, participatory research, or biodiversity documentation.
- **Collaborative capability:** Should be able to partner effectively with tribal departments, health researchers, NGOs, legal/IPR experts, experience in working with enterprises, especially start ups, MSMES that are engaged in research and development of herbal products.

3. Scope of Work

The implementing institution is expected to:

- **Analyze traditional knowledge** already documented in sources including *the People's Biodiversity Registers, PBRs [as per Biological Diversity Rules, 2024, Rule 11 Subrule (f)]*, with a focus on any bioresource used for food, medicine, or wellness.
- **Shortlist priority species** based on traditional use and commercial potential.

- **Conduct scientific validation** through toxicity studies (e.g., in vitro and in vivo models), pharmacological screening, phytochemical profiling, molecular characterization, and clinical trials.
- **Develop health/food/cosmeceutical products** such as nutraceuticals, herbal remedies, etc., ensuring they are safe, effective, and culturally appropriate.
- **Facilitate technology transfer and commercialization** through public-private or community-enterprise models.
- **Ensure benefit-sharing mechanisms** are developed in consultation with local communities and aligned with the Biological Diversity Act.
- **Conduct awareness and training programs** for Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), traditional knowledge holders, and local institutions on ABS and IPR.
- **Mainstream ABS practices** across departments, ensuring alignment with Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) and India's biodiversity targets.

4. Duration (Submit the project components along with a clear timeline and detailed action plans)

The project is planned for a duration of **3 years** from the date of fund disbursement, with the possibility of extension subject to proper justification. Institutions are expected to deliver time-bound results across various stages—documentation, validation, product development, capacity building, and final impact reporting.

5. Technical Requirements

Applicant institutions should demonstrate:

- **Scientific competence** in ethnobotany, pharmacology, toxicology, and biotechnology, particularly in medicinal plant research and product validation.
- **Capacity for field-based and laboratory work**, including infrastructure for molecular biology, animal cell culture, phytochemical analysis, and clinical coordination.
- **Legal/IPR knowledge** to handle protection of traditional knowledge, patent processes, and benefit-sharing frameworks.
- **Experience in participatory methods**, such as community consultations, awareness creation, and BMC engagement.

6 . Expected Deliverables (product development, Commercial agreement, ABS agreement with individual traditional knowledge holders/community)

The selected agency is expected to provide:

- **Screening report** listing prioritized ethnomedicinal species with rationale.
- **Comprehensive research data** from lab and field studies on selected species, including toxicity, efficacy, and safety.
- **Validated products** suitable for nutraceutical/ Cosmeceuticals or therapeutic use.

- **Technology transfer reports**, commercialization and IPR documentation (based on pilot studies)
- **Benefit-sharing frameworks** co-developed with communities and legally sound.
- **Reports of trainings/workshops** conducted for BMCs and TK holders.
- **Final technical and financial report**, including documentation of impacts, lessons learned, and sustainability strategies.

7. Budget and Funding

- **Annual budget ceiling**: Rs. 25.00 Lakhs (for the first year)
- Funding will be released in phases based on milestones.
- **Budget components** may include:
 - **Manpower**: Research assistants, consultants, lab staff.
 - **Fieldwork & Lab Studies**: Sample collection, testing kits, consumables.
 - **IPR and Legal Services**: For drafting benefit-sharing agreements and protecting community rights.
 - **Community Engagement**: Training materials, logistics for workshops, and awareness sessions.
 - **Travel and contingencies**: For field visits, stakeholder meetings, and data collection.

8. Proposal Format

Applicants must submit a structured EoI including:

1. **Letter of Intent** summarizing interest and project relevance
2. **Organizational Profile** outlining past work and achievements
3. **Methodology and Work Plan** (max 10 pages) detailing how objectives will be achieved
4. **Team Composition** with brief CVs of key personnel
5. **Institutional Infrastructure** available to support the project
6. **Indicative Budget**: Item-wise breakdown of expected costs including the details of the necessary lab equipments required for this kind of a project.
7. **Letters of Support/Commitment**, if the proposal involves collaboration with other entities (e.g., tribal organizations, research consortia, commercial enterprises)

9. Review & Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of:

- **Scientific quality** and clarity of the proposed approach
- **Relevance and experience** of the institution/team
- **Feasibility** of timelines and resource planning
- **Community integration and outreach strategy**, including gender and equity

considerations

- ***Product development and agreement with individual/community TK holder*** to promote sustainable use of indigenous knowledge systems.
- ***Capacity to ensure IPR compliance*** and develop ABS models aligned with legal frameworks
- ***Cost-effectiveness*** and sustainability of proposed interventions

10. Submission Deadline & Contact Details

Proposals must be submitted to KSBB by **September 20, 2025**.

All communications and submissions may be addressed to Member Secretary, Kerala State Biodiversity Board, Kailasam, T.C. 24/3219, No. 43, Belhaven Gardens, Kowdiar P.O., Thiruvananthapuram – 695 003, Email: keralabiodiversity@gmail.com

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Member Secretary

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