

REPORT ON THE CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (IDB-2018)

Theme: Celebrating 25 Years of Action for Biodiversity

The International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB-2018) was celebrated in the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB), Coimbatore, on 22nd May 2018. The theme of IDB-2018 was **Celebrating 25 Years of Action for Biodiversity** and it was chosen to mark the 25th anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on Biological Diversity and to highlight progress made in the achievement of its objectives at the national and global levels.

As India is a party to Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the country has taken several initiatives for conservation of biological diversity and its sustainable use. Further, actions have also been taken to prevent biopiracy and to ensure equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of biological resources and their associated traditional knowledge. In order to give a legal footing for these actions, the country has enacted the Biological Diversity Act in 2002 and framed relevant Rules in 2004.

The IDB-2018 was celebrated in IFGTB in a befitting manner by organizing a special talk by, Dr. R.V. Varma, Former Chairperson, Kerala State Biodiversity Board (KSBB), Thiruvananthapuram, on the topic "Biological Diversity Act-2002 and Rules-2004" to create awareness of this important Act among the researchers. The programme was started with an invocation on nature by Dr. Kannan C. S. Warriar, Scientist of IFGTB. Dr. C. Kunhikannan, Scientist F & Head, FECC Division welcomed the gathering. Dr. S. Murugesan, Group Coordinator (Research), IFGTB during his talk highlighted the importance of biodiversity and its conservation and underscored the need for preserving the biological wealth of the historical Forest Campus, in which the institute is situated. Dr. Mohit Gera, Director, IFGTB spoke on the direct and indirect values of biodiversity, including ecosystem services and aesthetic value. The Chief Guest, Dr. R.V. Varma, presented salient features of the Biological Diversity Act and Rules, the functions of the National

Biodiversity Authority (NBA), State Biodiversity Boards, Biodiversity Management Committees, which are the institutions created under the Act. He also highlighted the importance of the People's Biodiversity Register (PBR) and said that it is an important tool for documenting the biological resources and their associated traditional knowledge available among the communities, which often remains unrecorded. He suggested the researchers to meticulously follow the NBA guidelines while biological resources are handled, especially when research results / products are taken up for patenting / commercialization. He advised the researchers to be extra cautious while materials and research results are sent to foreign countries / agencies and requested to obtain required clearance from NBA in such cases. He also shared his rich experience as the former Chairperson of the Kerala State Biodiversity Board and Co-Chairperson of the Expert Committee on Access and Benefit Sharing in NBA. There were many queries from the participant's side and the speaker clarified all the points raised.

A brochure on ***Precious Trees of India -Series II***, made by the ENVIS Centre on Forest Genetic Resources and Tree Improvement was also released by the Chief Guest, Dr.R.V.Varma. Dr. K.R. Sasidharan, Scientist F, FECC Division proposed vote of thanks.

About 150 participants, including officers, scientists, staffs, research scholars and students undergoing internship took part in the celebration.



Director, IFGTB welcoming the Chief Guest



Address by Director, IFGTB



IDB Audience



Special talk by Dr. R.V. Varma, Former Chairman, KSBB



Release of Brochure "Precious Trees of India - Series II by ENVIS"



Interactions by the Audience