

MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
(Legislative Department)

New Delhi, the 5th February, 2003/Magha 16, 1924 (Saka)

The following Act of Parliament received the assent of the President on the 5th February, 2003, and is hereby published for general information:

THE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY ACT, 2002

No. 18 OF 2003

[5th February, 2003]

An Act to provide for conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the use of biological resources, knowledge and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

WHEREAS India is rich in biological diversity and associated traditional and contemporary knowledge system relating thereto.

AND WHEREAS India is a party to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity signed at Rio de Janeiro on the 5th day of June, 1992;

AND WHEREAS the said Convention came into force on the 29th December, 1993;

AND WHEREAS the said Convention reaffirms the sovereign rights of the States over their biological resources;

AND WHEREAS the said Convention has the main objective of conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of utilization of genetic resources;

AND WHEREAS it is considered necessary to provide for conservation, sustainable utilization and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of utilization of genetic resources and also to give effect to the said Convention.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Fifty-third Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

CHAPTER - I

Preliminary

1. Short title, extent and commencement

- (1) This Act may be called the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.
- (2) It extends to the whole of India.

- (3) It shall come into force on such date as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint:

Provided that different dates may be appointed for different provisions of this Act and any reference in any such provision to the commencement of this Act shall be construed as a reference to the coming into force of that provision.

2. Definitions

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

- (a) "benefit claimers" means the conservers of biological resources, their byproducts, creators and holders of knowledge and information relating to the use of such biological resources, innovations and practices associated with such use and application;
- (b) "biological diversity" means the variability among living organisms from all sources and the ecological complexes of which they are part, and includes diversity within species or between species and of eco-systems;
- (c) "biological resources" means plants, animals and micro-organisms or parts thereof, their genetic material and by-products (excluding value added products) with actual or potential use or value, but does not include human genetic material;
- (d) "bio-survey and bio-utilization" means survey or collection of species, subspecies, genes, components and extracts of biological resource for any purpose and includes characterization, inventorisation and bioassay;
- (e) "Chairperson" means the Chairperson of the National Biodiversity Authority or, as the case may be, of the State Biodiversity Board;
- (f) "commercial utilization" means end uses of biological resources for commercial utilization such as drugs, industrial enzymes, food flavours, fragrance, cosmetics, emulsifiers, oleoresins, colours, extracts and genes used for improving crops and livestock through genetic intervention, but does not include conventional breeding or traditional practices in use in any agriculture, horticulture, poultry, dairy farming, animal husbandry or bee keeping;
- (g) "fair and equitable benefit sharing" means sharing of benefits as determined by the National Biodiversity Authority under section 2 1;
- (h) "local bodies" means Panchayats and Municipalities, by whatever name called, within the meaning of clause (1) of article 243B and clause (1) of article 243Q of the Constitution and in the absence of any Panchayats or Municipalities, institutions of self-government

constituted under any other provision of the Constitution or any Central Act or State Act;

- (i) "member" means a member of the National Biodiversity Authority or a State Biodiversity Board and includes the Chairperson;
- (j) "National Biodiversity Authority" means the National Biodiversity Authority established under section 8;
- (k) "prescribed" means prescribed by rules made 1 under this Act;
- (l) "regulations" means regulations made under this Act;
- (m) "research" means study or systematic investigation of any biological resource or technological application, that uses biological systems, living organisms or derivatives thereof to make or modify products or processes for any use;
- (n) "State Biodiversity Board" means the State Biodiversity Board established under section 22;
- (o) "sustainable use" means the use of components of biological diversity in such manner and at such rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of the biological diversity thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations;
- (p) "value added products" means products which may contain portions or extracts of plants and animals in unrecognizable and physically inseparable form.

CHAPTER - II

Regulation of Access to Biological Diversity

Certain persons not to undertake Biodiversity related activities without approval of National Biodiversity Authority

3. (1) No person referred to in sub-section (2) shall, without previous approval of the National Biodiversity Authority, obtain any biological resource occurring in India or knowledge associated thereto for research or for commercial utilization or for bio-survey and bio-utilization.
- (2) The persons who shall be required to take the approval of the National Biodiversity Authority under sub-section (1) are the following, namely:
- (a) a person who is not a citizen of India;
 - (b) a citizen of India, who is a non-resident as defined in clause (30) of section 2 of the Income-tax Act, 196 1;

- (c) a body corporate, association or organization-
 - (i) not incorporated or registered in India; or
 - (ii) incorporated or registered in India under any law for the time being in force which has any non-Indian participation in its share capital or management.

Results of research not to be transferred to certain persons without approval of National Biodiversity Authority

4. No person shall, without the previous approval of the National Biodiversity Authority, transfer the results of any research relating to any biological resources occurring in, or obtained from, India for monetary consideration or otherwise to any person who is not a citizen of India or citizen of India who is non-resident as defined in clause (30) of section 2 of the Income-tax Act, 1961 or a body corporate or organization which is not registered or incorporated in India or which has any non-Indian participation in its share capital or management.

Explanation.- For the purposes of this section, "transfer" does not include publication of research papers or dissemination of knowledge in any seminar or workshop, if such publication is as per the guidelines issued by the Central Government.

Sections 3 and 4 not to apply to certain collaborative research projects

- 5.(1) The provisions of sections 3 and 4 shall not apply to collaborative research projects involving transfer or exchange of biological resources or information relating thereto between institutions, including Government sponsored institutions of India, and such institutions in other countries, if such collaborative research projects satisfy the conditions specified in sub-section (3).
- (2) All collaborative research projects, other than those referred to in sub-section (1) which are based on agreements concluded before the commencement of this Act and in force shall, to the extent the provisions of agreement are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act or any guidelines issued under clause (a) of sub-section (3), be void.
- (3) For the purposes of sub-section (1), collaborative research projects shall-
- (a) conform to the policy guidelines issued by the Central Government in this behalf;
 - (b) be approved by the Central Government.

Application for intellectual property rights not to be made without approval of National Biodiversity Authority