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Q17

How does biodiversity vary in India? How is the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 helpful in conservation of flora and fauna? (250 Words, 15 Marks).

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2018 · GS III · 15 marks · Environment and Conservation

Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

Core demand of the question

- Describe how biodiversity varies across India
- Explain how the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002** helps conserve flora and fauna, and recommend stronger use

Revision summary

- **India's living wealth varies by biogeographic zone:** Himalaya, north-east, Western Ghats, Deccan, desert, coasts, and islands.

Hotspots and farm genetic resources both count as biodiversity.

The 2002 Act sets **NBA**, State boards, and local BMCs, plus ABS and People's Biodiversity Registers.

That mesh fights bio-piracy and records local flora and fauna beside wildlife law.

Registers and ABS must be real, and EIA must read them, or the Act stays a form.

Flow diagram

Himalaya Ghats NE desert coast islands -> Varied flora fauna

BDA 2002 -> NBA SBB BMC SBB BMC

BDA 2002 -> Access benefit sharing

BDA 2002 -> PBR People's Biodiversity Registers

NBA SBB BMC -> Varied flora fauna

Access benefit sharing -> Community conservation

Conclusion

- Fund BMCs to **monitor and restore** (sacred groves, tanks, village forests), not only to fill registers.
- Speed honest ABS so communities see money and so science is not choked.
- Link heritage sites and PBRs to **Environmental Impact Assessment** so a road cannot skip documented biodiversity.
- Treat **crop and livestock diversity** (seed keeper, pastoral breed) as fauna and flora under the same care, not only tigers.

India's biodiversity changes with mountain, desert, Ghats, Deccan, coast, and island, and with the farm as well as the forest. The **Biological Diversity Act, 2002** helps by creating **NBA-SBB-BMC**, **ABS**, and local registers that protect flora, fauna, and knowledge. It works when those bodies are alive and tied to land-use decisions, not when they are only offices.

Facts & figures

Megadiverse India

India is recognised among countries with exceptional species richness and endemism across many ecosystems.

Western Ghats and Indo-Burma

Two biodiversity hotspots that cover large parts of Indian territory and neighbouring landscapes.

Biological Diversity Act, 2002

National law to conserve biodiversity, sustain use, and share benefits from biological resources and knowledge.

NBA

National Biodiversity Authority, the apex body for access approvals and national coordination under the Act.

People's Biodiversity Register

Local document of species and traditional knowledge prepared with the **Biodiversity Management Committee**.

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