



UTTARAKHAND BIODIVERSITY BOARD

Quarterly Newsletter

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8th Bird Festival Celebrates Uttarakhand's Avian Diversity at Mussoorie Wildlife Sanctuary, Organized by Uttarakhand Forest Department & Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board

The 8th Uttarakhand Bird Festival was held at the scenic Mussoorie Wildlife Sanctuary in Benog, Mussoorie, Dehradun, from October 18-20, 2024. This annual event brought together nature enthusiasts, conservationists, students, and bird watchers from across the country to celebrate and promote the conservation of birds and their natural habitats. The festival's main objective was to raise awareness about the rich avian biodiversity of Uttarakhand while encouraging eco-tourism and community involvement in conservation.

Inaugural Ceremony: A Grand Start

The festival officially kicked off on October 18, 2024, with an inaugural ceremony attended by several dignitaries, including the Uttarakhand Forest Minister, Shri Subodh Uniyal, Forest department officials, local NGOs, and conservationists. The chief guest emphasized the importance of preserving natural habitats and



Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler
©Sanjay Sondhi

"Biodiversity Conservation.... An art of living with nature."

the role of eco-tourism in sustainable development in the region.

The ceremony also featured a welcome address from the Forest Officials, followed by an inspiring keynote speech from Shri Uniyal, highlighting biodiversity conservation and the involvement of local communities. Cultural performances showcasing Uttarakhand's rich heritage added to the festive atmosphere. The event concluded with the release of a poster and short film on the Finn's Weaver, marking the official start of the festival.



Bird Watching Sessions: Immersive Nature Experience

Following the inauguration, a series of bird-watching sessions were organized at the sanctuary from October 18 to October 20, where over 150 participants took part. These sessions were conducted by experienced ornithologists and local birding experts, giving participants a chance to observe and identify a wide

variety of bird species in their natural habitat.

The bird-watching sessions took place from 7:00-9:00 am and 3:00-5:00 pm, allowing both early risers and afternoon enthusiasts to enjoy the experience.

Species Observed: Participants were able to spot a variety of species, including:

1. Hill Partridge
2. Great Barbet
3. Brown-fronted Woodpecker
4. Rufous-bellied Woodpecker
5. Gray-headed Woodpecker
6. Eurasian Hobby
7. Slaty-headed Parakeet
8. Long-tailed Minivet
9. White-throated Fantail



10. Eurasian Jay
11. Black-headed Jay
12. Green-backed Tit
13. Himalayan Black-lored Tit
14. Blyth's Reed Warbler
15. Black Bulbul
16. Ashy-throated Warbler
17. Hume's Warbler
18. Lemon-rumped Warbler
19. Whistler's Warbler
20. Gray-hooded Warbler
21. Whiskered Yuhina
22. Striated Laughingthrush
23. Rufous Sibia
24. Chestnut-tailed Minla
25. Rufous-chinned Laughing thrush
26. Scaly Thrush
27. Chestnut-bellied Rock-Thrush

The festival also included a series of talks, workshops, and panel discussions, enhancing knowledge

and engagement on various topics, including:

- ◆ Ethical nature watching and bird conservation.
- ◆ The conservation of Finn's Weaver in Uttarakhand.
- ◆ The ongoing search for the Himalayan Quail.
- ◆ The role of Citizen Science in bird conservation.
- ◆ The use of call playback, baiting, and hides for ethical bird watching in Uttarakhand.

Additionally, inspiring success stories of Nature Guides from Devalsari, Rathuadhab, Jaberkheta & GairdiKhata were shared, showcasing the positive impact of community-based conservation efforts in the region.

A Memorable Experience for All

The 8th Bird Festival at Mussoorie Wildlife Sanctuary was a resounding

success, fostering a deeper appreciation for Uttarakhand's rich birdlife and the importance of conservation. The event not only raised awareness about the diverse avian species found in the region but also inspired participants to take an active role in the protection of nature. The combination of engaging bird-watching sessions, insightful workshops, and the cultural festivities made this year's festival a memorable experience for everyone involved. The success of this festival continues to highlight the importance of collaborative efforts in wildlife conservation and the role of eco-tourism in preserving Uttarakhand's natural heritage.

With its continued focus on bird conservation and eco-tourism, the Uttarakhand Bird Festival remains a key event in the region's biodiversity calendar.



Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board Participates in Phase III Training of Trainers Workshop on Green Climate Fund Readiness in Dehradun

The Training of Trainers workshop aimed to enhance the understanding and capabilities of stakeholders in accessing and utilizing resources from the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Organized as part of the GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support – Phase III initiative, the event was hosted on November 28–29, 2024, by the Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM) in

partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC). Over two days, participants from various sectors, including policymakers, scientists, and project managers, engaged in discussions on GCF frameworks, national adaptation strategies.

Welcome address from Dr. Dhanya Bhaskar, Associate Professor

at IIFM, who set the stage for the workshop's objectives (Day-1). Ms. Sutanuka Sarkar, Deputy Director at





and impact pathways, to strengthen the justification for proposed climate interventions.

Dr. Aruna Pandey, Head of Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation, Bharat Rural Livelihood Foundation facilitated a focused discussion on the chapters of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), shedding light on the integration of poverty alleviation and livelihood improvement within the adaptation planning framework. The session underscored the importance of addressing socio-economic vulnerabilities in climate resilience strategies.

In a collaborative discussion, Ms. Sutanuka Sarkar and Ms. Soumya Bhatt highlighted the critical role of States and Union Territories (UTs) in formulating and implementing NAPs.

To conclude the sessions, participants were invited to share feedback through a post-training survey, providing valuable insights into their learning experiences and areas for improvement in future workshops.

The participants embarked on a field visit to Lambi Dher Mines, an eco-restoration site in the Mussoorie Hills. This visit offered a firsthand look at ongoing climate adaptation and restoration projects, showcasing the practical application of eco-restoration techniques in degraded landscapes.

The group also visited the 127 Eco Task Force Transit Camp, where a movie screening illustrated the significant contributions of this Eco Task Force in eco-restoration and reforestation efforts.

MoEFCC, delivered opening remarks emphasizing the critical role of GCF in supporting India's sustainable development through climate finance. The morning sessions included a pre-training survey to assess participants' existing knowledge of GCF, followed by a presentation by Mr. Sandeep Sarkar from GIZ on the necessity of innovative financing mechanisms to tackle climate issues. The session concluded with Ms. Sutanuka Sarkar providing an in-depth overview of GCF fundamentals and the No Objection Process.

Dr. Santanu Das delivered an insightful session on the Green Climate Fund's Investment Framework, elaborating on the diverse project types and funding windows available. He highlighted how these frameworks are strategically designed to address climate challenges through impactful and scalable interventions.

Ms. Sutanuka Sarkar provided a comprehensive overview of India's National Adaptation Plan (NAP), emphasizing its alignment with Green Climate Fund (GCF) priorities. She detailed the framework's objectives, strategies, and the significance of

integrating climate resilience into national development planning.

Dr. Adhikari presented key insights into adaptation resource mobilization and the critical data requirements for effective climate adaptation planning. The session underlined the importance of evidence-based approaches and robust data systems to facilitate actionable and impactful adaptation strategies.

Day 2 Mr. Muhammad Raneef, Project Manager, NABARD led an engaging session focused on the Proposal Development Cycle, offering participants a detailed guide on drafting concept notes and funding proposals tailored to Green Climate Fund (GCF) requirements. The session highlighted the critical elements of proposal structuring, ensuring alignment with GCF.

In a continuation, Mr. Raneef provided an in-depth exploration of Climate Rationale and Theory of Change, emphasizing their significance in GCF proposal submissions. Participants were introduced to the methodology for building logical frameworks, including defining clear objectives, outcomes,

Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board Participated in the 19th Uttarakhand State Science & Technology Conference (USSTC) organized by Uttarakhand State Council for Science and Technology (UCOST) at Doon University, Dehradun

The rural lives and livelihoods in the state of Uttarakhand had been closely interlinked with forests. The state had also been well known for its age-old community-based institutions for sustainable management of forests in the form of Van Panchayats. At that time, there were over 11,000 Van Panchayats in the state, varying in size. In addition, the state had established a large number of Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) to sustainably manage forest resources and local biodiversity. While several Van Panchayats and BMCs had made remarkable contributions towards participatory management of forests and bio-resources, in other areas, the age-old symbiotic relationship between local communities and forests had been dwindling due to the outmigration of local communities to urban areas, increasing human-wildlife conflicts,

and weak institutional mechanisms governing Van Panchayats. This had led to the degradation of forests, a decline in participatory approaches to forest management, and general apathy towards forest conservation. India's new forest policy aimed to protect forests from degradation and deforestation to preserve biodiversity and ecological balance and promote forest resources to support livelihoods, especially for forest-dependent communities, while ensuring long-term forest health. Furthermore, biodiversity conservation and safeguarding diverse flora and fauna to maintain ecological stability had been the main goals of forest management, alongside enhancing carbon sequestration through afforestation and reforestation efforts to combat climate change. As a progressive state, Uttarakhand had made

significant landmarks in maintaining the health of forest ecosystems and managing protected areas. Since a considerable area fell under Van Panchayats, the state needed to strengthen community-based forest conservation, including the prevention of forest fires and mitigation of human-wildlife conflicts, to complement its efforts in sustainably managing forest resources.

Panel Discussion on Community-Based Forest Conservation in Uttarakhand

As part of the 19th USSTC, a panel discussion had been planned for November 30, 2024. This session aimed to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of Van Panchayats in the state and explore ways to strengthen their role, the role of BMCs in forest conservation, the role of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) in managing forest fires and restoration, the management of buffer zones of protected areas with the help of eco-development committees (EDCs), addressing human-wildlife conflicts, and promoting forest-based eco-tourism as a strategy for sustainable forest management.

The session was chaired by Dr. Dhananjai Mohan, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of the Forest Force (HoFF), Government of Uttarakhand. The coordinator of this session was Dr. G.S. Rawat,



Emeritus Scientist at UCOST, with Co-coordinators Ms. Kanchan Dobhal and Dr. Naveen C. Joshi, Scientific Officers at UCOST.

Panelists:

Shri B.P. Gupta, IFS, PCCF (Van Panchayats), Government of Uttarakhand.

Shri Nitish Mani Tripathi, IFS, Member Secretary, Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board.

Dr. Koko Rose, IFS, Director, Rajaji Tiger Reserve.

Shri Gajendra Pathak, Member, Sheetlakheth Van Panchayat.

Participants:

Representatives from BSI, FRI, ZSI, HESCO, HARC, Himmotthan, Naula Foundation, Seemant Foundation, as well as researchers and faculty from various universities and institutions.



Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board Participates in International Seminar on Medicinal Plants: Strengthening the Supply Chain for Medicinal Plants

The International Seminar on Medicinal Plants, held on December 14-15, 2024, in Dehradun, focused on "Strengthening the Supply Chain for Medicinal Plants." Associated with the 10th World Ayurveda Congress (WAC) and sponsored by NMPB, Ministry of AYUSH, the event gathered experts to discuss sustainable management and scientific utilization of medicinal plants for human welfare.

Prof. Arun Kumar Tripathi, Hon. Vice Chancellor of Uttarakhand Ayurveda University, Acharya Balakrishna, CEO of Patanjali Ayurveda Group, and Prof. Mahesh Kumar Dadhich, CEO of the National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB), graced the inaugural session.

Key Outcomes and Discussions:

1. Silver Jubilee Celebrations of NMPB:

The NMPB celebrated its Silver Jubilee on November 24th, 2024, with former CEOs of the Board invited to share their experiences and future vision. The suggestions included relaunching cultivation schemes to strengthen Farmers' Producer Organizations (FPOs), ensuring precise monitoring and documentation for conservation.

2. Panel Discussions:

- ◆ *Panel 1:* Focused on global market opportunities and emerging opportunities

for premium stocks of raw medicinal plants. The consensus was the need for innovative business models to tap into these opportunities.

- ◆ *Panel 2:* Discussed three key aspects of the supply chain—Quality, Sustainability, and Inclusivity—calling for multi-stakeholder partnerships to direct supply chains in a new direction.

3. Technical Sessions:

- ◆ *Session 1:* Addressed the cultivation scenario in different agro-climatic zones, highlighting the steady growth in areas under cultivation and



the importance of market linkages.

- ♦ Session 2: Discussed quality standards for the AYUSH industry, phytopharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals, and cosmeceuticals.
 - ♦ Session 3: Focused on supply chain management and agribusiness financing, offering new insights into building robust supply chains to meet both domestic and international demands.
4. **Career Development Session:**
A concluding panel discussion targeted students and young

researchers, exploring career opportunities and entrepreneurship in the medicinal plant industry. Experts from industry, startup businesses, provided guidance on career development.

The seminar attracted over 200 delegates, including 35 participants exclusively attending the seminar, 50 biotechnology students, and other attendees registered for the core WAC event.

This seminar highlighted the challenges and opportunities in the medicinal plant sector and emphasized the need for



collaboration and innovative strategies to strengthen the supply chain for these valuable resources. It also explored the role of research, technology, and policy support in enhancing the quality and availability of medicinal plants.



Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board visit to National Biodiversity Authority of India, Chennai and Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board

The Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board (UBB) participated in a peer-to-peer visit organized by the National Biodiversity Authority of India (NBA), Chennai, and the Tamil Nadu

Biodiversity Board from December 22, 2024, to December 27, 2024. The visit aimed to enhance understanding of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, the roles of NBA, State Biodiversity

Boards (SBBs), and Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) in biodiversity conservation, particularly in the context of recent amendments to the Act and Rules. Additionally, discussions covered intellectual property rights (IPR), bio-piracy, and the role of IPR in biodiversity protection. The activities conducted on each date are as follows:

On December 24, 2024, the UBB team, comprising the Member Secretary and other staff members, visited the NBA office in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Dr. B. Balaji, IFS, Secretary, NBA, welcomed the delegation and provided an overview of the NBA's activities. The UBB team engaged in discussions with





NBA officials regarding the recent amendments to the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

Dr. K.P. Raghuram, Technical Officer (Benefit Sharing), NBA, delivered a presentation titled "Introduction to the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, and the Role of NBA, SBBs, and BMCs in Biodiversity Conservation in the Context of Recent Amendments to the Act and Rules." He provided a comprehensive overview of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the concept of Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS), key amendments in the Biological Diversity (Amendment) Act, 2023, and the Biological Diversity Rules, 2024. Additionally, he shared insights into ABS applications received by the NBA across India. He added that NBA has received a total of 8926 ABS applications,

of which 6564 applications have received draft agreements directly to applicants, 5695 applications have been approved, and 1491 applications have been closed. He also sought the ABS amounts collected by the UBB from AYUSH companies from 2018 to 2024.

Additionally, he emphasized on the following points:

- ◆ Applications for commercial utilization alone should be granted approval or otherwise based on the existing benefit-sharing formula.
- ◆ State-specific Biological Diversity Rules need to be amended.
- ◆ The Board must be reconstituted.
- ◆ The State Government must prescribe the composition of the BMC.
- ◆ BMCs need to be reconstituted as per the composition prescribed by the state.
- ◆ Guidelines for exempting cultivated medicinal plants should be developed, and BMCs must be trained to undertake this activity.

K. Chitrarasu, Advisor (Law), NBA, delivered a comparative presentation on offenses under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, as amended in 2023. He also discussed case studies





related to fair and equitable benefit sharing.

Ms. Rambha Chaudhary (Technical Officer - IPR) and Dr. M. Sundar Rajan (Consultant-Legal Affairs), National Biodiversity Authority, gave presentation according to the new amended act on Intellectual Property and Biodiversity, Biopiracy, Role of IPR in the Protection of Biodiversity, negative effect of biopiracy etc.

Later on, the UBB team, comprising the Member Secretary, visited the office of the Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board (TNBB). The Member Secretary, TNBB, welcomed the team and provided an overview of their activities through a PowerPoint presentation. The UBB team engaged in discussions with TNBB officials regarding various activities related to the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

Interaction with Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board

Following this, the TNBB facilitated a visit for the UBB team to the Padur Village Panchayat Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC). During the visit, the BMC president, BMC members, and representatives from NGOs participated and provided insights into the activities and achievements of the Padur BMC, particularly in biodiversity

conservation, sustainable use of resources, livelihood development, and environmental protection. The team also visited the model herbal garden, nursery, and mushroom cultivation chamber developed by the Women's Self-Help Group in Padur.

Next working day, the UBB team visited the Irula Snake Catchers Society in Chengalpattu District for an exposure visit to observe the snake collection, storage, and venom extraction processes. Later, a meeting on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) mechanisms was conducted by the Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board with the Irula Snake Catchers Society and BMC members of Vadanemmeli Village Panchayat, along with the UBB team.

The society earned the "Successful Tribal Entrepreneur" appreciation certificate from the National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation, New Delhi. In 2023-24, the society generated ₹1,03,18,162 from its snake-catching activities. This society serves as an ideal example of the Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) mechanism. The royalty for snake trapping is remitted to the Forest Department at Rs. 150 per snake. Additionally, the society received a dealership license from the Chief Wildlife Warden by depositing Rs. 500 to the Government. At the end of this program UBB team visited the Ramsar sites such as Pallikaranai Marshland, Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary and Karikili Bird Sanctuary and few potential wetlands of Chennai.



Awareness Program Conducted by the Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board

The Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board successfully conducted awareness program between October and December 2024, celebrating key occasions such as Wildlife Week, International Snow Leopard Day, International Day of Climate Action, and Children's Day in various schools across four blocks in the Dehradun district. The program covered a total of 53 schools: 3 in Vikasnagar block, 14 in Raipur block, 32 in Sahaspur block, and 4 in Doiwala block. Approximately 2,400 students participated, along with members of the Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board and school teachers.

The program included engaging activities, such as a video presentation

on biodiversity and its importance, as well as competitions like poetry contests and wildlife identification challenges. To promote the message of sustainability, the Board distributed badges and animal facemasks made from recycled material to the students. The program concluded with a tree plantation initiative on school campuses, aimed at educating students about India's biodiversity, its significance, and the role of sustainability in preserving our natural heritage.

Wildlife Week 2024

Wildlife Week is celebrated annually in India from October 2 to October 8 to raise awareness about the importance of wildlife conservation.

In 2024, the theme was "Living in Harmony with Wildlife," encouraging people, especially children, to respect and protect animals and their natural habitats.

During this program, the Board organized exciting activities for students, such as nature walks, drawing competitions, and storytelling sessions about animals. Experts also shared tips on how we can care for wildlife by planting trees, avoiding littering, and saying no to plastic. Wildlife plays a vital role in keeping the Earth healthy and beautiful, and by protecting animals and their homes, we contribute to a brighter future for everyone.





International Snow Leopard Day 2024

International Snow Leopard Day is celebrated every year on October 23 to raise awareness about the importance of saving snow leopards. These beautiful, shy animals are called the **"Ghosts of the Mountains"** because they live high in the snowy mountains of countries like India, Nepal, and China.

Snow leopards are endangered due to habitat loss and poaching, with fewer than 7,000 left in the wild today.

On this day, the Board organized fun activities like drawing contests, storytelling, and talks to educate students on how to protect these magnificent creatures. By planting trees, conserving water, and reducing plastic use, we can help protect snow leopards & their habitats.

International Day of Climate Action 2024

The International Day of Climate Action is celebrated every year on October 24 to inspire people to take

action against climate change and protect our planet. Climate change causes rising temperatures, melting ice, floods, and droughts, affecting both humans and animals.

In 2024, the theme was "Youth Leading the Climate Charge," encouraging students to become climate heroes. The Board organized activities like tree planting, recycling drives, and awareness campaigns in schools to show how small actions can make a big difference. By saving





Government Upper Primary School, Aamwala,
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Primary School, Phulsani,
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Upper Primary School, Kohlupani,
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Primary School, Baniyawala,
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Junior High School, Prempurmafi, Kaulagarh
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Higher Secondary School, Jhivrehedi,
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun



Shri Rajrajeshwari Public School, Nathuwawala,
Block-Doiwala, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Senior Secondary School, Dandapuram,
Block-Vikasnagar, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Inter College, Nathuwawala,
Block-Doiwala, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Primary School, Indiranagar,
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Upper Primary School, Galjiwadi,
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Higher Secondary School, Ajabpur Chowk,
Block-Raipur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government High School, Kotra Santaur, Block-Raipur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Inter College, Nathuwawala,
Block-Doiwala, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Primary School, Dhulkot,
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Primary School, Veerpur Khurd,
Block-Doiwala, Distt.-Dehradun



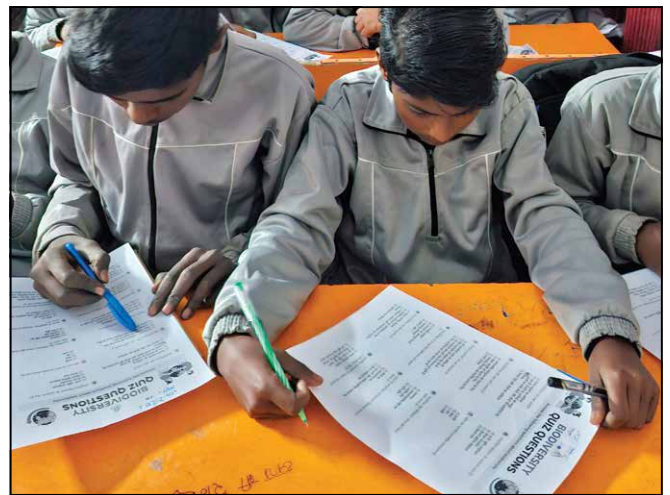
Government Higher Secondary School, Malsi,
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Primary School, Bibiwalah, Block-Doiwala, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Primary School, Hariyawala Kalan,
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Upper Primary School, Kohlupani,
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Higher Secondary School, Jaintawala,
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun



Government Higher Secondary School, Jhanjara,
Block-Sahaspur, Distt.-Dehradun

energy, reducing waste, and adopting eco-friendly habits, we can all contribute to the fight against climate change.

Children's Day 2024

Every year on November 14, India celebrates Children's Day in remembrance of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the country's first Prime Minister who adored children and saw them as the country's future. In order to create a powerful and progressive nation, he underlined the value of education and fostering young minds.

On this special day, the Board organized fun activities such as games, drawing contests, cultural performances, and storytelling

sessions. It's a time for children to have fun and feel cherished! Children's Day also encourages us to learn diligently, aspire high, and show kindness to others.

Awareness Program Highlights

The awareness program focused on the following key areas:

- 1. Information on Biodiversity, its importance, and its conservation.
- 2. Poster, essay, and painting presentations on biodiversity and climate change.
- 3. Film screenings on biodiversity.
- 4. Awareness about the environmental impact of firecrackers.
- 5. Storytelling on topics like:
 - ♦ What is biodiversity?

- ♦ Types of biodiversity.
 - ♦ The importance of biodiversity.
 - ♦ Conservation efforts and the role of students in biodiversity conservation.
- 6. "Imagine with Me"—a fun activity for students to explore the importance of biodiversity.
 - 7. **Tree plantation** by students on school campuses.
 - 8. **Quizzes** to test knowledge on biodiversity and climate action.

This comprehensive program aimed to engage students and instill a deeper understanding of biodiversity, sustainability, and climate action through fun and interactive activities.



Guidance

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Direction

Shri Nitish Mani Tripathi, IFS, Member Secretary

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