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Biodiversity Management Committees

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Why in News

The **National Green Tribunal** has extended the time limit for the constitution of **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)** and preparation of **People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs)** on account of the **Covid-19 pandemic**.

Key Points

- **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMC)**
 - As per the **Biological Diversity Act 2002**, BMCs are created for **“promoting conservation, sustainable use and documentation of biological diversity”** by **local bodies** across the country.
 - **Composition:**
 - It shall consist of a **chair person** and **not more than six persons nominated by the local body**, of whom not less than one third should be women and not less than 18% should belong to the **Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes**.
 - The main function of the BMC is to prepare **People's Biodiversity Register** in consultation with the **local people**.

- **People's Biodiversity Registers (PBR):**
 - The Registers entail a **complete documentation of biodiversity** in the area plants, food sources, wildlife, medicinal sources, etc.
 - **Advantages of PBR:**
 - A good PBR will aid in **tracing how habitats are changing**, and to understand and estimate parts of our forests.
 - **Prevent Biopiracy:**

The **indigenous and local community** are a repository of traditional knowledge and their knowledge and practices help in **conservation and sustainable development of biodiversity.**
 - Being a bottom-up exercise, it is also a means of understanding the **overlap of cultural and natural biodiversity.**
 - It envisages a decentralised way through an **inclusive approach.**

Biodiversity Governance in India

- India's **Biological Diversity Act 2002** (BD Act), is in close synergy with the **Nagoya Protocol** and aims to implement provisions of the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**.

The Nagoya Protocol sought to **ensure commercial and research utilisation of genetic resources** led to **sharing its benefits** with the government and the community that conserved such resources.
- The BD Act was hailed as an important step towards preserving **India's vast biodiversity**, as it recognised the **sovereign right of countries over its natural resources.**
- The BD Act seeks to address issues of **managing bio-resources in the most decentralised** manner possible.
- The BD Act envisages **three layered structures:**
 - The **National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)** at the national level.
 - The **State Biodiversity Boards (SSBs)** at the state level
 - **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)** at the local level.
- The act also strengthens the country's stand with respect to anyone claiming an **intellectual property right over biodiversity-related knowledge.**

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

A **legally binding treaty** to conserve biodiversity has been in force since 1993. It has **3 main objectives:**

- The **conservation** of biological diversity.
- The **sustainable use** of the components of biological diversity.
- The **fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.**

Source:HT