

**Two-Days Student's Meet**  
*on*  
**Biodiversity Awareness to Meet  
Future Requirements**

**(October 23 – 24, 2024)**

***Sponsored by***

**The National Academy of Sciences, India (NASI)  
Under Science-Society Programmes**



***Organized by***



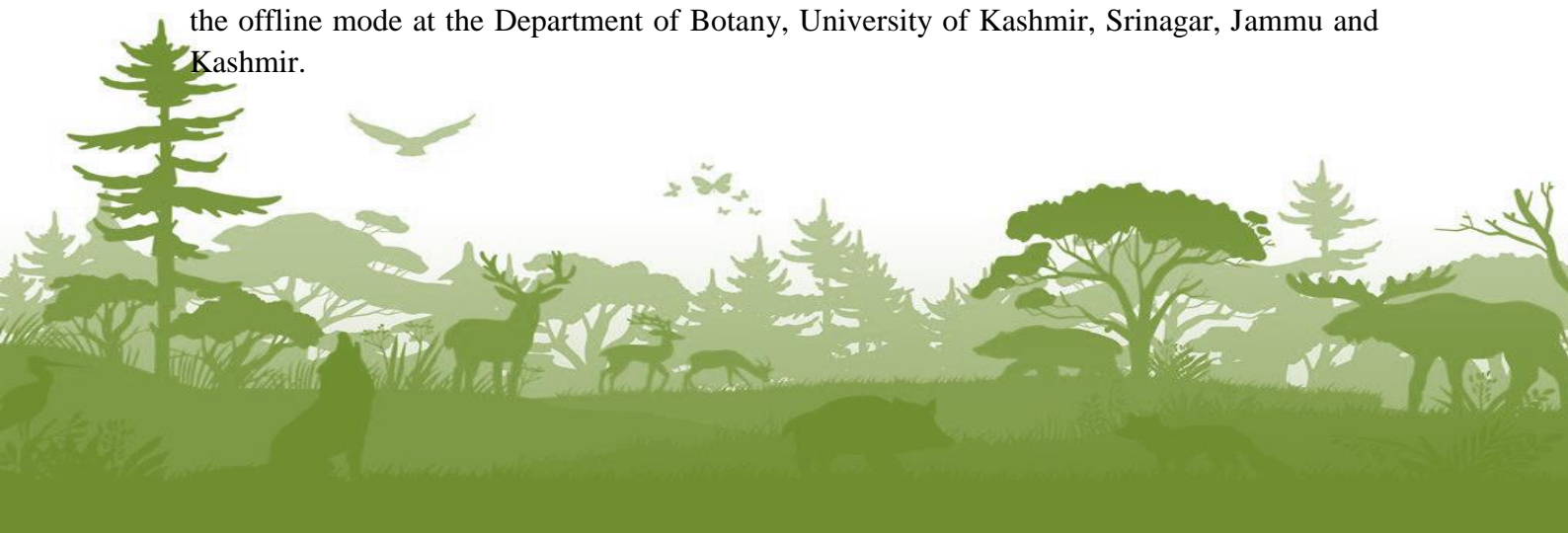
**Department of Botany  
University of Kashmir  
Srinagar, J & K, India**



## Background

Biodiversity is the variety of different forms of life on planet earth, including plants, animals, micro-organisms, the genes they contain and the ecosystem they form. It includes the diversity at genetic, species and ecosystem levels within an area or habitat. The biodiversity we see today is the result of billions of years of evolution, shaped by natural processes and increasingly, by the influence of humans. So far, about 2.1 million species have been identified, though as per UNEP estimates there are 9.0 to 52 million species existing on earth. Biodiversity contributes to the human well-being as various productive materials such as food, fodder, fuel, medicine, industrial raw materials and alike are obtained from biodiversity. Biodiversity plays a major role in maintaining the ambient levels of CO<sub>2</sub> and O<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere besides mitigating impacts of climate change by contributing to long-term carbon sequestration. The rate of species extinction and the associated changes in the natural environment are now faster than ever before in the geological past and there is no sign of this rate slowing down. Biodiversity is declining rapidly due to factors like habitat destruction and fragmentation by the land use change, overexploitation of biological resources, climate change, pollution and invasive alien species. Such natural or human-induced factors tend to interact and amplify each other.

The North-Western Himalayan region of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) is incredibly rich in biodiversity of plants, animals and microbes. Despite its indispensable role in our economy and the well-being of future generations, the biodiversity of J&K is being lost at an increasingly alarming rate, largely due to unprecedented human activities. This has necessitated utilization of a comprehensive approach which includes knowledge about biodiversity among the younger generations, up-to-date scientific information on diversity, distribution, utilization, and assessment of threat status in different groups of biota, from the microbial to the largest life forms. Given the importance of public education and awareness about this pressing environmental issue, the Department of Botany is organizing a two-day's Biodiversity Meet with focus on active participation of the young research scholars from different universities and research institutes of this region. The research scholars will be encouraged to present their perspectives on this important issue and suggest ways and means to assess (morphological, cytological, biochemical and molecular) and utilize the locally available biodiversity in supplementing and further improving the available bioresources for use as food supplements, nutraceuticals, medicinal and other economically important products. This Meet will provide the young investigators a platform to express their ideas and innovations, through orally and poster presentations. Leading biodiversity experts will serve as the advisory group to monitor the proceedings of the Meet. The Meet will be conducted in the offline mode at the Department of Botany, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir.





## Objectives

- To disseminate knowledge on the utility of biodiversity for food, fodder, fuel, medicine, ornamentals.
- To assess and analyse the biodiversity at morphological, cytological, biochemical and molecular levels.
- To discuss and debate on need for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for future human wellbeing and identify the current challenges and future opportunities.

## Expected outcome

The Student's Meet, a unique initiative, on biodiversity will help sensitizing the young minds to realize the importance of conserving biodiversity and promote its sustainable use for future generations. The awareness programme will also benefit the local people in understanding the importance of biodiversity, causes of its depletion and possible ways for preventing its loss.

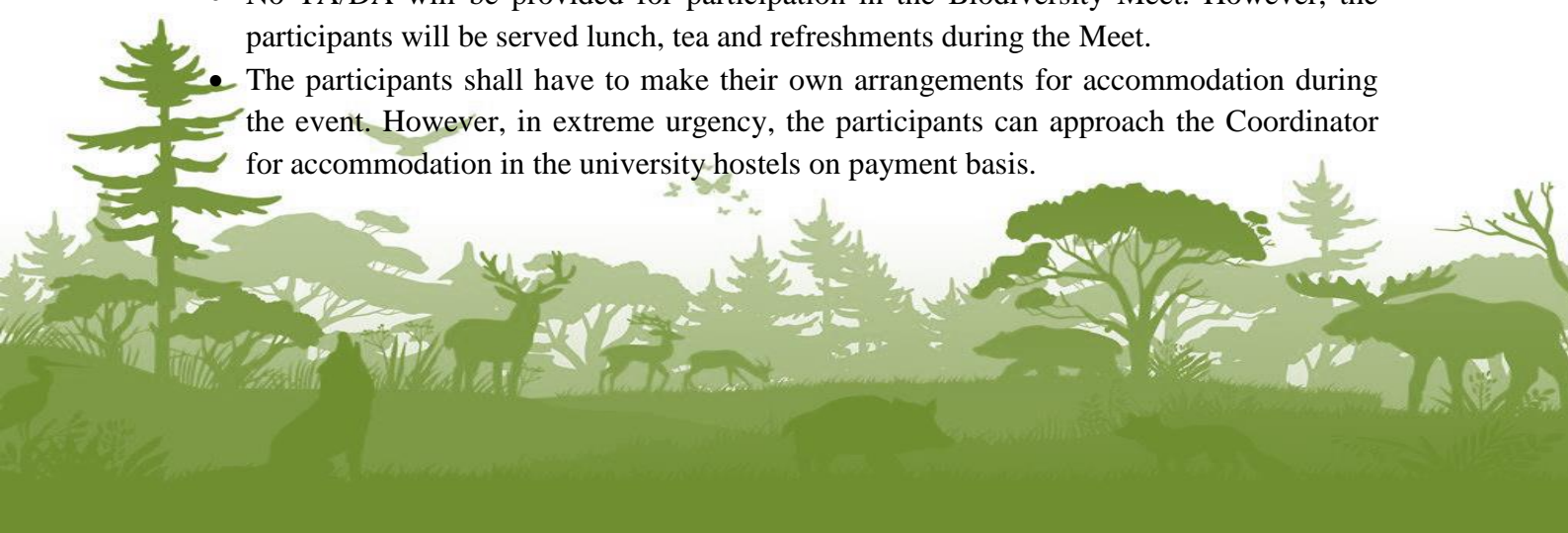
## Thematic areas

1. Biodiversity for food, fodder, fuel, fibre, medicine and aesthetics.
2. Traditional knowledge, human health and wellbeing.
3. Threats to biodiversity.
4. Conservation and sustainable utilisation of biodiversity.
5. Challenges and opportunities in biodiversity conservation.
6. Biodiversity policy, management and restoration.

## Who can participate?

This Meet is intended for young research scholars of various universities and institutions working in the area of biodiversity in the region. To provide adequate time to the participants their total number will be restricted to 50. The abstracts on oral/poster presentations received from participants will be screened by a panel of experts in the Department of Botany and the selected candidates will be informed after the last date of submission of abstracts. The participants will be provided with a certificate for their oral/poster presentation.

### Note:

- The selected participants do not have to pay any registration fee to participate in the Biodiversity Meet.
  - No TA/DA will be provided for participation in the Biodiversity Meet. However, the participants will be served lunch, tea and refreshments during the Meet.
  - The participants shall have to make their own arrangements for accommodation during the event. However, in extreme urgency, the participants can approach the Coordinator for accommodation in the university hostels on payment basis.
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## Registration (Important Dates)

Registration starting date: 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2024

Abstract submission deadline: 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2024

Registration link: <https://forms.gle/KxXAxPjmgkWXRT3b8>

## About NASI

The present student meet is sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences, Prayagraj, India under its Science and Society programme. Founded in 1930 by Professor Meghnad Saha, NASI is the oldest Science Academy of our country. Besides holding its annual conference and publishing research findings, the Academy has a country wide connect through its 22 local chapters. Academy promotes, scientific interactions, interventions and discourses for human welfare.

## About the Department

The Department of Botany's modest seed, planted in 1961 and nurtured by renowned botanists, scientists, and naturalists, has grown into a massive tree, its branches bursting with blooms of scholarship and dispersing fruits of excellence. Since its inception, over a half-century ago, the Department has made tremendous growth, reaching numerous milestones. The Department has evolved into a mega-entity that includes important adjuncts such as an internationally recognised herbarium (KASH), the Centre for Biodiversity and Taxonomy (CBT), and the Kashmir University Botanical Garden (KUBG), which features a high altitude garden at Gulmarg. Rare distinction of running major international and national projects, and earning two levels of special funding by the Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India under its Fund for Improvement of Science & Technology Infrastructure (FIST) scheme and grant of Special Assistance Programme (SAP) by the University Grants Commission (UGC), testify to the achievements of the Department in teaching and research.



## About the University

The University of Kashmir, located in Hazratbal, Srinagar, is flanked by the world-famous Dal Lake to the east and Nigeen Lake to the west, under the foothills of the Zabarwan Mountains and alongside the Holy Hazratbal Shrine. The University's Main Campus, which covers 247 acres, is divided into three parts: the Hazratbal Campus, the Naseem Bagh Campus, and the Mirza Bagh Campus (the latter serving a residential purpose), in addition to having three satellite campuses (North Campus, South Campus, and Kupwara Campus). The tranquil ambiance of the campus makes it ideal for serious intellectual discourse and research studies. Over the years, the University has strived for excellence in its curriculum and activities. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council of India (NAAC) has re-accredited it as a Grade-A+ university, and it is currently ranked 33rd among the top 50 universities in the country under NIRF 2023. This ranking reflects the high standard of quality in teaching and research at the University of Kashmir.



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## **Programme Coordinator**

**Prof. Aijaz Ahmad Wani**  
**Department of Botany,**  
**University of Kashmir**

### **Advisory Committee**

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**Address for correspondence:** All communications with respect to the Biodiversity Meet shall be made to:

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