

## **Government staff apprised of provisions in biodiversity act**

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Coimbatore: As many as 33 officers from various government departments on Wednesday attended a one-day programme, where they were informed about rules and provisions in the Biodiversity Act, 2002, at the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding here. The officers, including forest rangers, officials from the rural development department and the veterinary and fisheries department, learnt that they need to maintain biodiversity registers, a record of all the flora and fauna in an area. "This rule applies to all government bodies, including city corporations, gram sabhas, panchayat offices," said IFGTB director Mohit Gera. "They can enlist the help of para taxonomists, forest departments and zoologists for the purpose. Any changes in the flora and fauna in their area have to be reported to the biodiversity management committee, which should also be present in every government institution. The committee in turn informs the state government biodiversity board about the changes," he said. Besides, the officers were taught how to form a biodiversity management committee, its role, functions and composition. "We told them that we are training people to become para taxonomists, who they can hire, and how they can enlist the help of experts from our institute," he said. The officers were also made aware of the act's policies on benefit sharing and using of India's biological resources for production or research abroad. "They were informed about regulations regarding transfer of technology, rules regarding application of patent rights for research regarding India's biodiversity resources, joint ownership of intellectual property rights and ways to pay non-monetary compensation," said Gera.

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