

Minutes of the First General Body Meeting of the Indian Pollinator Initiative held on 27th November 2021

The First General Body Meeting of the Indian Pollinator Initiative was held online on 27th November 2021. The meeting was attended by 25 participants from across the country. This meeting is a culmination of activities spearheaded by a group of Indian researchers working on different aspects of pollinator biology and ecology from IISER-TVM, NCBS-Bangalore, University of Agricultural Sciences-Bangalore, University of Calcutta, Hyderabad Central University, Central University of Kerala, Kasaragod and Bioversity International since 2018. With this brief introduction from Dr. Parthiba Basu, a detailed account about the genesis of the Initiative and its various activities was presented by Dr. Axel Brockman. He reported about the online seminar series on Pollinator Biology where colleagues from all over the world delivered lectures on a diversity of relevant topics. This series was followed by a seminar with student talks. These talks are made available for a wider audience through the webpage www.inpollin.com Dr. Brockman reported.

This was followed by a presentation by Dr. Hien Ngo of the UN FAO who briefed the assembly about various past UN initiatives to foster pollinator research and conservation particularly through FAO and CBD and IPBES. She highlighted that there are 4 major regional initiatives and 31 national pollinator strategies at present and she heartily welcomed the formation of the Indian Pollinator Initiative. She reported that COP of CBD held in 2018 adopted the plan of forming second International Pollinator Initiative and she felt hopeful that InPollin can be a part of the larger network.

This was followed by comments on the future direction of the initiative from Dr. K.R. Shivanna and Dr. Renee Borges, eminent pollination biologist of the country who have made pioneering contributions. Dr. Shivanna the need for promoting education on pollinators at different levels in our education system – from the school level to the university (he specifically mentioned about introducing this at the agricultural university curriculum. He also wished that InPollin will catalyze a survey of pollinator diversity in different parts of the country. Dr. Renee Borges pointed out the sorry state of information on pollinator biology in the country and stressed on the need for creation of a reliable and usable database on Indian pollinators. She also stressed the need for Agricultural universities including pollinator biology in the curriculum and the need for a standardized methodology and protocol for carrying out pollinator survey and research in the country.

Dr. Dhriti Banerjee (Director, Zoological Survey of India) stressed on the need for suitable placement opportunities for trained taxonomists and promised wholehearted support of the ZSI for InPollin.

Dr. P. Sinu then placed the Charter and the By laws of the initiative. The charter says that the initiative is a platform for researchers to exchange ideas, advance the quality and quantity of research and education and promote collaboration between a network of research groups concerned and working on the ecology of pollinators in India. Further, the initiative plans to foster outreach activities to raise the public and governmental awareness for the conservation of pollinators and will offer expert opinion on all issues concerning pollination services including pollinator-friendly farming.

Smitha, ATREE and Pratibha Mohan, ZSI also participated in the discussion.

Dr. Joby Joseph then proposed the new Governing Council of the Initiative. A Mentor body comprising eminent pollinator biologists of the country who have made life long contribution in the field was also proposed. This mentor body was proposed to be a permanent body. The formation of the Governing Council and the Mentor Body was approved.

The newly constituted Governing Council is as follows:

Governing Council of the Indian Pollinator Initiative (inPollin): 2021-22

Mentor Group

Dr. K. R. Shivannna
Dr. Renee Borges
Dr. Priya Davidar
Dr. Uma Shaanker
Dr. K. Ganeshaiah
Dr. D. P. Abrol

President

Dr. Parthiba Basu

Secretary

Dr. V. Belavadi

Treasurer

Dr. Smitha Krishnan

Members

Dr. Hema Somanathan
Dr. Axel Brockman
Dr. P. Sinu
Dr. Joby Josephh
Dr. Soubadra Devy
Mr. Sajesh Vijayan
(Three more members to be inducted)

Editor of InPollin BUZZ

Dr. P. Sinu

It was also proposed and resolved that the Initiative will be registered in Bengaluru with its official address at University of Agricultural Sciences. It was also proposed that following registration of the initiative a Bank Account will be opened.

Dr. Smitha Krishnan proposed the Vote of thanks.