

STATE BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AWARDS ANNOUNCED

Panaji: May 20, 2026

Goa State Biodiversity Board has announced the “Goa State Biodiversity Conservation Awards for the Year 2025” in appreciation of exemplary contribution in the field of conservation of biodiversity, ecology and Environment. The award presentation ceremony will be held on May 22, 2026 at Lok Bhavan, Dona Paula.

In the BMC Category Award (prize amount of Rs. 50,000/- each), Parcem-Pernem BMC (North Goa) has awarded recognizes the outstanding efforts of the BMC in preparing the People’s Biodiversity Register through a participatory and well-validated process.

Navelim BMC (South Goa) bagged the BMC Category award for recognizes the dedicated efforts of the Navelim BMC under the leadership of Chairpersons Smt. Priya Almeida and former Chairperson Smt. Celly Quadros in promoting biodiversity conservation and community participation.

Appreciation awards announce to Verna, Barcem Quedem and Cana Benaullim BMC from South Goa and Siolim Sodiem BMC from North for their contribution towards biodiversity conservation activities, preparation of PBR and other initiatives.

In Individual category award: Dr. Baban Ingole (North Goa) is awarded in recognition of his over 40 years of his dedicated research on Goa’s marine biodiversity, including studies on estuarine fauna, bivalves, benthic polychaetes, mangroves, oysters, and coral ecosystems. His work has significantly contributed to building a comprehensive understanding of the ecological and economic importance of coastal and estuarine species.

Shri. Datta Shambhu Naik (South Goa) for his outstanding contribution as an environmentalist, matoli artisan, and cultural guide from Priol, Goa, for preserving Goa’s biodiversity and traditional knowledge.

Appreciation award (In Individual Category) are awarded to Shri. Chetan Shantaram Talwar, Smt. Romaldina Fernandes (North Goa) and Shri Rohidas G. Kuncoliker, Smt. Francisca Gaudo and Shri. Pandurang Patil (South Goa) for their contribution in the field of Environment, Biodiversity and their traditional knowledge.

Shri. Gajanan Shamsundar Shetye is awarded with the recognizing his lifelong passion for nature as a wildlife photographer and naturalist from Keri, Sattari, Goa. Shri. Roque Da’Costa (South Goa) is awarded in Enthusiast category for decade-long dedication to wildlife rescue and rehabilitation in Curchorem, Quepem, and surrounding ecologically sensitive areas.

Appreciation award in Enthusiast Category is awarded to Shri. Alisab Shaikh, Rescuer, Forest Dept, (North Goa) and Shri. Francisco Fernandes (Pele) and Shri. Joao Souza Mergulhao (South Goa) for their contribution in the field of biodiversity conservation.

In Applied Biodiversity Researcher Category Prof (Dr.) Bernard Felinov Rodrigues is awarded for his pioneering work on Arbuscular Mycorrhizal fungal

diversity and Dr. Sujata Dabolkar and Dr. Suhas Shetye for their contribution towards applied biodiversity research, natural farming, forestry & conservation initiatives.

Ms. Gauree Mohandas Shenvi Malkarnekar has been awarded in Green Journalist Category. A senior journalist with over 20 years of experience, she has played a vital role in highlighting Goa's environmental concerns and conservation efforts through impactful and balanced reporting. Similarly, appreciation award in Green Journalist Category is awarded to Shri. Prasad Ravindra Sawant, Shri. Gurpreet Singh and Smt. Nida Sayad for their vast experience of reporting, writing on biodiversity and other related fields.

Special Appreciation (Certificates, Memento, Cash Prize 5000/-) is to the following local body Secretaries officiating as BMC Secretaries or Chairpersons or active Members for their noteworthy work in facilitating the BMC functioning. – Shri. Rupesh Kalangutkar (Secretary, Virnoda), Shri. Gururnath Kerkar (Secretary, Querim-Sattari), Shri. Shubham Bhartu (BDO Pernem), Ms. Mazel Fernandes (Batim Chairperson), Shri. Shirish Pai (Shristhal), Shri. Rajendra Sawant (Dongurli Thane Secretary), Smt. Vidhi Gaonkar (Caurem Pirla, Chairperson), Smt. Namita Vijayprasad Hazare (Secretary, Shiroda), Shri. Rajat Narvekar (Secretary, Querim Ponda), Ms. Kriselle Afonso (Betalbatim Chairperson), Shri. Amarnath Govenkar (Pilerne) and Smt. Sharmila Volvoikar (Piligao).

Special Recognition for Goa State Biodiversity Conservation Awards 2025 (Certificates and Memento only) for contribution in the field of Biodiversity is awarded to Shri. Jairam Gaonkar, Shri. Alkesh Mistri, Shri. Sanjay Hondkar, Shri Vinay Gauns, Shri. Vishal Rawlley, Shri. Vishant Bandekar, Drishti Marine, Reef Watch, Shri Vishwanath Gawas (ZAO), Shri. Nilesh Shamba Parwar (ZP, Querim), Ms. Mugdha Shirodkar.

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