



NRAA-Funded Wild Rice Conservation Project Secures Major Milestone in Assam

Borjuli Site in Sonitpur Notified as Biodiversity Heritage Site

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The National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA), under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, has achieved a significant milestone in the conservation of India's wild rice genetic resources through its funded project titled "In-situ Conservation and Management of Wild Rice (*Oryza rufipogon*) in Sonitpur District of Assam." The project has been implemented since 2022 by the ICAR–National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (ICAR-NBPGR), New Delhi, in collaboration with the Assam State Biodiversity Board.

A team of scientists from ICAR-NBPGR called on Dr. Chandra Shekhar Kumar, IAS, Chief Executive Officer, NRAA, and briefed him on the project's achievements in the exploration, conservation and characterization of wild rice germplasm. The team informed that the Borjuli site in Sonitpur district of Assam, identified under the project, has been notified as a Biodiversity Heritage Site by the National Biodiversity Authority. The recognition marks a major step towards conserving India's rich wild rice diversity and strengthening climate-resilient agriculture.

Commending the efforts of the research team, Dr. Chandra Shekhar Kumar said that wild rice species are an invaluable source of genes for developing climate-resilient, high-yielding and nutritionally superior rice varieties. He emphasized the need to replicate similar conservation initiatives for other crop wild relatives across the country to enhance the resilience, sustainability and long-term food security of Indian agriculture.

The meeting was facilitated by Dr. Pankaj Kumar Shah, Director (Agriculture & Horticulture), NRAA, and Dr. Anil Kumar Mishra, Technical Expert (Watershed Management), NRAA.

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(रिलीज आईडी: 2280202) आगंतुक पटल : 3024

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