

Terracon Ecotech Pvt. Ltd analyses biodiversity potential of Mira Bhainder

Cities are most affected by the growth of businesses and industries, skylines and sceneries change as the economy grows. Natural capital is given least importance in cities; high-energy consumption and carbon emissions affect the biodiversity and ecosystems in and around them. The National Parks's Board of Singapore in collaboration with the Convention on Biological Diversity developed a tool called the 'City Biodiversity Index' to assess the biodiversity of cities. The City Biodiversity Index is made up of three components – Native Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Governance & Management. As many as 50 cities around the world have taken the decision to analyze their Biodiversity and have led the way for other cities to follow and apply the City Biodiversity Index to their development plans and processes. Mira Bhainder was the first Indian city to use this Index and is the great Case Study of India showcasing our eagerness to conserve and



prosper. Terracon Ecotech Pvt. Ltd., an ecology based environment consultancy firm based in Mumbai, carried out first such study for the city of Mira Bhainder, a suburb of Mumbai. The score resulted in the Corporation taking major initiatives and projects to improve its score in future.

Terracon Ecotech is currently busy calculating CBI for Thane Municipal Corporation and would be preparing LBSAP by the end of this calendar year, making it the first Municipal Corporation to undertake such activity in India. This would be a precedent that must be followed by other Corporations to ensure balanced urban growth and sprawl that haunts us all.

“CBI is an important tool that

provides baseline data and guidance for preparation of Local Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (LBSAP) for a city. LBSAP needs to be prepared by all cities to not only implement the policies laid down under the National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan but also to mainstream biodiversity in the planning process. LBSAP, if properly implemented, can lead to improved quality of life for citizens and create competitive advantage for city administration in better positioning of the city,” said Ashok Jain, Director, Terracon Ecotech Pvt. Ltd.

Integrated Biodiversity and Ecosystem services are the way forward once a City's Biodiversity Index has been calculated. The government has a huge role to play in city urban planning and implementing targets to preserve biodiversity in cities. The Local Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (LBSAP) is a very important way for ecological urban planning and capacity building.