



[Prof Savita Kerkar](#), Senior Professor of Biotechnology and Dean, School of Biological Sciences and Biotechnology conferred with the *Goa State Biodiversity Conservation Award* on 23 May 2023 for the Magnanimous Research over 33 years on the Biodiversity of Saltpan bacteria of Goa and the natural salt and their various biotechnological applications.





## Goa State Biodiversity Board

(An Autonomous Statutory Body, Government of Goa)

Takes immense pleasure in conferring "Goa State Biodiversity Conservation Award" for the year 2023 in the Applied Biodiversity Research category



To

**Dr. Savita Kerkar**

The Goa State Biodiversity Board proudly honours you for magnanimous research of over 33 years of endeavours on the biodiversity of Marine Actinomycetes, associated with Salt pans in Goa. Your research gives additional value to something we took for granted and are now on the verge of losing an exceptional nutritional ingredient from our Goan diet, if not for your long-term vision. Your efforts are even more praiseworthy for giving our humble Goan Saltpan bacteria international recognition, as an alternative sustainable fish feed to promote human health among poor local populations consuming farmed carp and Tilapia fish in India and Africa. Your pioneering research on the Ribandar and Agarwada saltpan bacteria increased the yield and survival of shrimp when threatened by a pathogenic menace in aquaculture and that they could be used as a bioremediate to mop up excess concentrations of toxic lead and ferric ions in the environment. When our chilly plants were hit with a fungal pathogen, your isolated halotolerant bacteria from Batim, Agarwada and Ribandar salt pans were used as an effective biocontrol agent and likewise as an antifungal agent in increasing the shelf-life of mushrooms. You have also shown that these saltpan bacteria can improve the quality of Khazan soils by formulating an inexpensive and eco-friendly biofertilizer. You have also carefully demonstrated the potential of producing new antibiotics from the Goan Saltpan actinomycetes proving them to be valuable and inculcating the importance of conserving the saltpan regions in Goa.

Alongside your active involvement in scientific research, you paved your path in the highly dignified profession of teaching at Goa University, and not just in Goa, but in the SMR Maritime University of our neighbouring country, Bangladesh, thus opening diplomatic relations in scientific endeavours. We also feel happy to confer this award on a Veteran Indian Arctic Expedition member giving the title of this award even more weightage with your past honours and credits.

As an esteemed member of various committees of the Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority, Goa SEAC, Goa State Pollution Control Board and the Goa State Biodiversity Board, you have selflessly devoted to promoting the repair of the bunds and sluice gates to help protect the salt pans in Goa, thus bringing back the traditional occupation of salt production in Goa with its additional benefits previously unknown to most of us. Hence Goa State Biodiversity Board is profoundly happy to award you with the prestigious "Goa State Biodiversity Conservation Award" for the year 2023 in the Applied Biodiversity Research category.

**Dr. Pradip Sarmokadam**

Member Secretary, Goa State Biodiversity Board; Head of the Nodal Agency, Goa State Wetland Authority;  
Nodal Officer, Goa SCCC, SLSC for NAFCC; Member, Environment Protection Council;  
Member, State Level Advisory Committee on Solid Waste Management, BoD GWMC



जीववैविध्यरक्षा स्वातः जनानां भाविभूतये

ध्यान से संवर्धन जैव-विविधता का  
उज्ज्वल भवितव्य होगा अगली पीढ़ी का

जतनायेन सांवाळ जैव-विविधतायेचो  
परजळीत फुडार फुडले पिळगेचो

काळजीपूर्वक जतन जैव-विविधतेचं  
उज्ज्वल भवितव्य पुढच्या पिढीचं

Careful Conservation of Biodiversity  
Bright Future for Prosperity!