

Background

Casuarinas are planted on a large scale in the country for various uses. The area under Casuarinas stands at approximately 8 lakh hectares, concentrated mainly in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, West Bengal and Gujarat. It is naturally found in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the introductions in mainland India have evolved into a land race. Economically, this is an important species for the coastal farmers, to whom this provides an insurance against agricultural failure.

In India, Casuarina gained focus as a cash crop in the 1980s and it led to a surge in Casuarina research. The Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB), which is mandated to improve the productivity of forests and plantations, took up research on improvement of Casuarina. The 1st National Seminar on Casuarinas was held by this Institute in association with the Tamil Nadu Forest Department and the Tamil Nadu Forest Plantation Development Corporation (TAFCON) at Neyveli in 1989. Thereafter, a lot of development has taken place in the domestication and utilization of Casuarinas. The breeding programme of *Casuarina equisetifolia* commenced in 1996 by IFGTB with assistance under FORTIP and Planting Stock Improvement Programme (PSIP) of the World Bank funded Forestry Research Education and Extension Project (FREEP) and a large number of Seed production populations have been established, yielding genetically improved seeds. Similar programmes have been undertaken by other state forest departments also, mainly the Andhra Pradesh Forest department. Two sub-species of *Casuarina junghuhniana* were introduced into India under the said projects, and this has attracted the attention of farmers in drier tracts of the country, due its adaptation to the arid conditions. Advanced research in the fields of tissue culture, genetic transformation, gene isolation, etc., pests and diseases and symbiotic association with Frankia are also being studied. On the utilization side, though the major uses were for scaffolding and fuelwood in the past, it had reduced due to the introduction of steel scaffoldings and improved distribution network of LPG for cooking purposes. The use of Casuarina as a pulpwood has gained importance in the last decade. Its recent use is in generation of energy through gasifiers, to

gain carbon credits under the Clean Development Mechanism. In other countries, it also finds use as structural timber. This species provides subsistence for the socially and economically backward coastal communities. . Casuarina is also a preferred species for ecorestoration and environmental protection and hence assumes importance in the era of climate change, where all the physico-chemical stresses are likely to get exacerbated.

The Institute formed a National Network in the year 1996 with support from the World Bank under FREE project. The first meeting of the Casuarina Network was at IFGTB, Coimbatore during 1997 wherein a common action plan was initiated. The second and third Workshops were also convened at IFGTB during 1998 and 1999 respectively and the fourth Annual Workshop was held at Institute of Wood Science and Technology, Bangalore during September 2000. The fifth and final Workshop was held in Regional Forest Research Centre, Lalacheruvu, Rajahmundry (Andhra Pradesh) in 2001. These workshops provided a platform for the casuarina researchers of the country to interact among themselves and establish their programmes in the field. Following this, there has been a lull in the casuarina network meetings as a result of which comprehensive information on various research activities being undertaken in the species is not available. The Institute formulated an All-India Coordinated project for Casuarina Improvement for five years from 2009 to 2014, but this has not commenced.

Objective

The 2nd National Seminar on Casuarinas is being held at Coimbatore, in the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding, on 3rd and 4th of March, 2011. This two day seminar will consolidate the research upto date on the species of Casuarina in the country, and also to provide a platform for the Casuarina researchers for exchange of information and ideas. This will also help in forming the network required to implement the All-India Coordinated project on Casuarina.

Coverage of the Seminar

1. Seed science and technology
2. Nursery techniques and vegetative propagation

3. Plantation management
4. Agroforestry and Extension
5. Harvesting techniques
6. Nutrient cycling and Productivity studies
7. Tree improvement
8. Bioenergy and Casuarina
9. Biotechnology
10. Utilization and value addition
11. Use in Pulp and paper industry
12. Novel uses of Casuarina
13. Marketing, trade and wood flow
14. Registration of Casuarina clones/ IPR and legal issues
15. Casuarina in environmental amelioration
16. Socio-economic studies and Casuarina for livelihood security

VENUE

The Seminar will be held at the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding, Coimbatore. The city is located at the foothills of Nilgiris which is the junction of the Eastern and Western ghats. The weather is pleasant during February. The city is well connected by road, rail and air.

ACCOMMODATION

Limited accommodation is available in the Institute guest house/ hostel that can be arranged on 'first come, first served basis'. Good quality budget hotels are also available in Coimbatore at an affordable cost. Participants will have to bear the cost of transport and accommodation. For accommodation enquiries/requests may be sent to Shri R.S.C. Jayaraj, IFS, Organising Secretary either by post or email at jayaraj@icfre.org or rscjayaraj@hotmail.com or rsc.jayaraj@gmail.com

REGISTRATION AND SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS

Participants may register using the form attached. The registration fees of Rs. 500/- may be attached through a Demand draft drawn in favour of the Director, Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding, Coimbatore. **There is no registration fee for ICFRE employees.**

One page abstract (500 words) including the title, authors, affiliation and key words should be submitted to

the Organizing Secretary by 10th January, 2010, by post, FAX or e-mail. Abstract should be submitted in MS Word format. Acceptance will be notified to the corresponding authors by 15th January 2011. Full paper of the accepted abstracts should be submitted by 31st January, 2011. The papers shall be brought out in the form of Proceedings. No publication of abstracts is proposed.

For information, contact:

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Organizing Secretary

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REGISTRATION FORM

Title: Prof./Dr./Mr./Ms.

Name:.....

Designation:.....

Organization/Institution:.....

Address:.....

City :.....

PIN code:.....

E-mail

Tel

Mobile

Name of accompanying person(s) (if any):

Details of accommodation:

Required / Not required

Registration fees

Applicable / Not applicable

If Applicable,

Details of Demand Draft

Place: Signature of the Applicant

Date:

**2nd National seminar on
Casuarinas**

3-4 March 2011

**Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding,
(Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education)
Coimbatore**