

**Recommendations of the Workshop
on *Forestry for Common People* held
on 25th - 26th November 2008 at Forest
Research Institute, Dehradun**

WORKSHOP RESUME

Today, good governance is a major issue in all organizations specially the civil societies. For a production system like forest, governance embodies management and benefit sharing between state and the people. How an entity dealing with forestry research like Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, Dehradun should reorient itself to address the twin elements of management and benefit sharing, so that its programmes and activities reflect the true aspirations of the common Indian, was the central theme of the workshop. A gamut of politicians, administrators, researchers, non-government functionaries, farmers, and individuals pondered over the issue for two days in the serene surroundings of the Forest Research Institute, Dehradun to channelize and give shape to synergies amongst objectives and activities of the research organizations, government bodies, the NGOs and the user groups including farmers and the industry.

The issue was approached at various levels and with respect to different dimensions; for example, strategies were worked out for effective participation of people in forestry. It was emphasized that efforts must focus on rural India where value addition of plethora of forest products is the need of the hour. Everyone recognized that science has a vital role to play in the development of the state and the society. This can happen only if scientific applications and practices are able to reach the common man through state (scientific institution) – community (NGOs) interface. Experiences were also shared with a view to increase the participation of people in forestry science and technological innovations as it had been done in case of utilization of lantana weed for making products of daily use. Use of Lantana has turned a liability into a resource that could replace the dependence of rural people of South India on bamboo as a raw material for making many household articles. Of late, greater emphasis has also been laid on the subject of gender especially in the backdrop of the need to bring womenfolk into the mainstream of forestry programmes. This kind of thrust is crucial for their mental, physical and spiritual upliftment leading to economic independence. It was also stressed that there was tremendous scope and need for validation of traditional knowledge for product development. The local market needs and changes in the markets due to globalization would require further studies and research to facilitate general acceptance of these products.

Shri Sundar Lal Bahuguna, the famous environmentalist favoured development of a 'Himalayan Policy' comprising the basic elements of capital of soil, water, food, etc. used by the large population inhabiting northern Himalayan hills and the Indo-Gangetic plains of the country. He was emphatic that a '*Save Himalaya Movement*' must be started to negate the impacts of short-sighted development that is now threatening the ecology and environment of this great mountain expanse.

The recommendations that emerged out of the many rounds of serious deliberations of the workshop are presented for your valuable comments and suggestions.

Session 1. *Scope and potential of collaboration amongst SFDs, research organizations and civil societies for extension*

Speaker: Dr. Anil Joshi

Chairperson: Shri R. Rajamani

Co-Chairperson: Dr. S.S. Negi

Rapporteur: Dr.Y.P.Singh, Er. Rajesh Bhandari

Recommendations:

1. Rural India is a major resource and Indian economy should be developed using indigenous materials.
2. Value addition of indigenous products may be done with appropriate application of science. The science should supplement the traditional knowledge rather than replacing it.
3. There is a strong case for utilizing the available useful technologies for the public good.
4. Application of science and knowledge should be made simple to improve the rural economy. There is a strong need to create scientific institution– NGOs /community interface to rationalize and socialize science and knowledge. For example, ICFRE institutes can create working linkages with the NGOs in their respective regions of the country for taking appropriate technologies to the rural communities.

Session 2. Partnership for pro-community science, technology and environment.

Speaker: Dr. R. Umashaanker

Chairperson: Dr. Prodipto Ghosh

Co-Chairperson: Dr. G.S. Rawat

Rapporteur: Dr. P.K. Gupta, Shri Tarun Johri

Recommendations:

1. Science should be sensitive to the people's needs (pro-community science).
2. The support to livelihood gain should have minimum environmental cost.
3. The technology options offered to people must be simple, low cost, high volume with utilization of local skills. Such options can only be sustained on the support of local market.
4. The available technologies must be first used at large scale and their knowledge base be pooled and shared to develop new initiatives. Example, multiple uses of bamboo and rattan in south were successfully replaced by lantana as raw material.

Session 3. Gender mainstreaming in forestry programmes

Speaker: Ms. Jyotsna Sitling

Chairperson: Shri V.K. Nautiyal

Co-Chairperson: Dr. P. Soni

Rapporteur: Dr. Y.P.Singh, Er. Rajesh Bhandari

Recommendations:

1. Forestry related programmes need to increase the participation of women which use their skill, and are also supported by capital. Awareness must be created among women to participate in relevant programmes.
2. The participation of women in forestry programmes will not only increase their economic independence, but also their health index as well as consciousness.
3. There is strong need to reorient such programmes as per the requirements of changing market scenario.

Session 4. *Delivery mechanism of existing knowledge in forestry sector.*

Speaker: Dr. D. Surya Kumari

Chairperson: Dr. R. Umashaanker

Co-Chairperson: Shri V.R.R. Singh

Rapporteur: Dr. P.K. Gupta, Shri Tarun Johri

Recommendations:

1. Assessment of VSSs to know the performance index.
2. Training needs of VSSs to be taken care of by creation of training institute for VSSs.
3. Regular budgeting allocation to be made for VSSs in the budgets in the State Government.
4. Simplify procedures for flow of return from forest into JFMCs accounts.
5. Under NREGA, funds need to be allotted for forestry operations (like labour component).
6. Interface with research organizations like ICAR, CSIR and ICFRE needs to be encouraged and institutionalized for collaborative efforts on validation of traditional knowledge and development of products with the help of professional support.

Session 5. JFM /CFM – Sharing of experiences.

Speaker: Dr. Gopa Pandey

Chairperson: Dr. R.B.S. Rawat

Co-Chairperson: Shri A. S. Rawat

Rapporteur: Dr. Y.P. Singh, Er. Rajesh Bhandari

Recommendations:

1. Eco-tourism activities should mainly be handled by local communities, and an exercise needs to be carried out to identify more activities that could be assigned to JFM committees.
2. Eco-tourism activities should be leveraged for improving the quality of participation of JFM committees in protection and management of local forests.

Valedictory and Synthesis Session:

Chairperson: Shri Jagdish Kishwan, DG, ICFRE

Co-Chairperson: Mr. C.K. Sreedharan, PCCF, Tamil Nadu

Rapporteur: Dr. Y.P. Singh, Er. Rajesh Bhandari

The recommendations of each Technical Session were presented, deliberated upon, and given final shape for being sent to all participants and other stakeholders.

It was also agreed that at national level ICFRE and HESCO will collaborate in formulating models for joint collaboration between each of the eight ICFRE institutes and a Civil Society of repute to be identified jointly by ICFRE, HESCO and concerned ICFRE Institute. The ICFRE Institute-Civil Society model will work for strengthening the extension related to forestry research by taking appropriate technology developed by Institute to local community utilizing extension expertise of the Civil Society.