

**Forest Research Institute, Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education, Dehradun, India
celebrates International Year of Biodiversity**

United Nations General Assembly had declared 2010 as the 'International Year of Biodiversity (IYB)' to help raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity through activities and events in many countries. International Year of Biodiversity was a year-long celebration of biological diversity and its value for life on Earth, taking place around the world in 2010. In this series, Forest research Institute, Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education, Dehradun has organized a one-day consultative meeting on the topic "Biodiversity: Challenges and Issues" on December 16, 2010. Dr. G. S. Rawat, Director General, Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education, Dehradun was the Chief Guest of the Meeting. In this consultative meeting five invited lead speakers had delivered talks in five sessions. The participants were from forestry institutions based at Dehradun, State Forest Departments, State Biodiversity Boards, Vice Chancellors of Universities of Uttarakhand, scientists and officers from ICFRE institutes and other dignitaries standing for the cause of biodiversity.

The details of the sessions and recommendations are listed below:

SESSION 1

Chairman: Dr. V.P.S. Arora, Vice Chancellor, Kumaun University, Naini Tal

Co-Chairman: Mr. S.C. Joshi, Director, Institute of Wood Science & Technology, Bangalore

Lead speaker: Professor R.D. Gaur, Retd. Head, Department of Botany, H.N.B. Garhwal University, Shrinagar

Topic: Challenges and issues of plant diversity in India

Recommendations

- A white paper on status of floral diversity may be prepared with precise data at state and if possible at district level
- Strategies may be developed for biodiversity conservation at Village Panchayat level
- Capacity building may be done in key areas of taxonomy, ecology, conservation, etc. with the support from UGC and MoEF
- Awareness about biodiversity and its conservation may be generated in the formal as well as informal systems of education; the communication must be in languages that would be understood by all sections of society, including the tribals

SESSION 2

Chairperson: Dr. Gopa Pandey, Chief Conservator of Forests (Planning), Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, Bhopal

Co-Chairperson: Dr. Dhananjay Mohan, Wildlife Institute of India, dehradun

Lead speaker: Mr. H.S. Panwar, Retd. Director, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun

Topic: Challenges and Issues Facing *in situ* Conservation of Biodiversity and Wildlife Including Concerns of Local Communities

Recommendations

- Adverse impact of rising population on biodiversity may be studied and suitably factored in biodiversity conservation strategies
- Under storey, ground floor and humus must also be taken into account, rather than crown cover alone, in assessment of the state of forests
- Effective steps may be taken to restore the unutilized and degraded lands
- Well-being of forest-dependent people should be improved to reduce their dependence on the forest
- Long-term perspective strategy may be developed at landscape level

SESSION 3

Chairman: Dr. S.S. Garbyal, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Mizoram

Co-Chairman: Dr. T.S. Rathore, Director, Arid Forest Research Institute, Jodhpur

Lead speaker: Prof. C.R. Babu, Professor Emeritus, Centre for Environmental Management of Degraded Ecosystems, University of Delhi, Delhi

Topic: Biological invasions, loss of biodiversity and management of invasive species be studied and suitably factored in biodiversity conservation strategies

Recommendations

- Extensive field-based research should be carried out to study issues concerning biodiversity conservation
- Effective and practical measures should be taken throughout the country for control of invasive species and the progress of these efforts must be monitored on long-term basis for eradicating the menace posed by invasive species

- Grazing, fire, fragmentation, etc. should be checked to assist the growth of native species

SESSION 4

Chairman: Sh. Sandeep Tripathi, Director (Research), Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education, Dehradun

Co-Chairman: Sh. N.K. Vasu, Director, Rain Forest Research Institute, Jorhat

Lead speaker: Dr. A.K. Ghosh, Director, Centre for Environment & Development, Kolkata

Topic: Climate change and biodiversity: Indian perspective

Recommendations

- An All-India Coordinated Research Project on impact of climate change on biodiversity may be formulated and conducted to generate relevant information
- Research on extreme ecosystems such as alpine in the Himalayas, and mangroves in coastal areas, etc. may be taken up on priority as they are more profoundly affected than others
- Area-specific long-term studies should be carried out to understand exact impact of climate change on bio-diversity including migration pattern, flowering times and phenology.
- Studies for development and validation of existing and new simulation models may be carried out for effective prediction of impact of climate change and creation of authentic and optimal databases

SESSION 5

Chairman: Dr. S.S. Negi, Director, Forest Research Institute, Dehradun

Co-Chairman: Sh. Mahender Pal, Director, Himalayan Forest Research Institute, Shimla

Lead speaker: Sh. N.S. Yadav, Member Secretary, Gujrat State Biodiversity Board, Gandhinagar

Topic: Biological Diversity Act 2002 in relation to other related acts

Recommendations

- Defining of commercial utilization should be extended from end users to traders as well in the Biodiversity Act 2002

- Clarity is also required in the Act on issues like IPR, international collaborative research project, etc.
- Central Govt. should delegate powers with the State Governments to authorize Govt. officers for taking cognizance and for search, seizure, arrest, enquiry and filing charge sheet, etc.
- Effective mechanism should be developed for valuating, and recovering from the industry the economic benefits already derived by them by utilizing biological resources
- Some concrete parameters and specific guidelines should be evolved for declaration of Biodiversity Heritage Sites.

Rapporteurs:

Dr. Dinesh Kumar

Dr. Y.P. Singh



Shri Sandeep Tripathi, Dr. S. S. Negi, Dr. G. S. Rawat & Dr. N. S. K. Harsh at Inaugural function



Shri S. C. Joshi, Dr. V. P. S. Arora & Professor R. D. Gaur in First Session



Dr. Dhananjay Mohan, Dr. Gopa Pandey & Shri H. S. Panwar in Second Session



Professor C. R. Babu, Dr. S. S. Garbyal & Dr. T. S. Rathore in Third Session



Shri N. K. Vasu, Shri Sandeep Tripathi & Dr. A. K. Ghosh in Fourth Session



Shri Mohinder Pal, Dr. S. S. Negi & Shri N. S. Yadav in Fifth Session



Shri N. S. Yadav, Shri H. S. Panwar, Dr. G. S. Rawat & Dr. A. K. Ghosh at Plenary Session



Dr. Shilpa Gautam conducting the Sessions



Audience during the Meeting

Dr. Dinesh Kumar presenting the recommendations

Dr. N. S. K. Harsh proposing a vote of thanks

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