

## **Workshop on "Integrating Forest Based Enterprises with Rural Development for Livelihood Support and Economic Growth"**

India's forests provide life sustaining resources for around 350 million people living in and around 32 million hectares of forests. For sustainable management of these forests, the ICFRE has totally changed the focus of its research programmes and is now engaged in developing models for forestry based livelihood options apart from other important related aspects of diversity conservation and climate change adaptation and mitigation. ICFRE, with its nine research institutes and three research centers spread across the country, have successfully created models and technologies to help in promoting livelihoods in rural areas, especially the forest fringe villages. ICFRE is continuing forest extension programmes for capacity building of rural people to support their livelihoods.

In this regard, a one day Workshop on **"Integrating forest based enterprises with rural development for Livelihood support and economic growth"** was organized by ICFRE on 21st March 2013. The Workshop also marked the celebration of World Forestry Day. The Workshop was inaugurated by Shri T.K.A. Nair, Advisor to Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. The Director General, ICFRE, Dr. V.K. Bahuguna welcomed the Chief Guest, all the delegates and presented a brief overview of forestry research in India and the changed focus of ICFRE to address the issues of livelihood support and economic growth, especially in the rural areas of the country. He highlighted some of the recent initiatives and some of the technologies that can be used for rural livelihood support programmes.

The Hon'ble Chief Guest Shri Nair, in his inaugural address, emphasized that changing dimensions in the governance of forests have been necessitated in order to strengthen the forest based livelihoods of around 350 million rural people. He said that the future forest management will be directed towards fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals, under which poverty is envisaged to be reduced by half by the year 2014 and in this regard, institutions like ICFRE have an extremely important role to play by working for the scientific management of the country's natural resources. In addition, representation from rural Institutions, Mrs. Madhu Chauhan, likes Panchayat Adhyaksh Dehradun, Sh. Baldev Thakur Sarpanch Nauni Solan, Himachal Pradesh and Sh Kunwar Singh. Surpanch from Yamunanagar Haryana also presented their views.

More than 100 Stake holders such as representatives of State Forest Departments, Van Panchayats, Gram Sabhas, Non Govt. Organizations and Self-Help Groups working in the field of rural livelihoods attended the Workshop. In addition the senior officers and scientists from ICFRE and FRI attended the workshop and deliberated with the rural representations. These stake holders were mainly from the states of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh.

At the end of the inaugural session, Shri Saibal Dasgupta, Deputy Director General (Extension) proposed the Vote of Thanks.