Training Programme on "Land Restoration and Biodiversity Conservation for Sustainable Livelihood"-India

19th – 21st February 2014

The Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding, Coimbatore has organized a three day training programme on "**Land Restoration and Biodiversity Conservation for Sustainable Livelihood**" under the Project Policy and Institutional Reforms for Mainstreaming and Upscaling *Sustainable Land and Ecosystem Management (SLEM)* in India from 19.02.2014 to 21.02.2014. The training was conducted for officials from SACON, Tamilnadu state Agriculture department, Horticulture department, Forest department, KFRI (Kerala Forest Research Institute) Peechi, Kerala, Scientists and research officers from ICFRE (AFRI, Jhodpur, TFRI, Jabalpur, IIP Ranchi & CFRHRD, Chindwara, IFGTB ,Coimbatore, representatives from NGOs, and Tree Growers Association. The inauguration of the training programme was held on 19.02.2014. Dr. P.A. Azeez, Director, SACON inaugurated the training programmes as Chief Guest. Shri R.S. Prashanth, IFS, Head, FLUCC Division delivered the welcome address. He addressed that more that 75% land of Agriculture are dry in India due to Land detritions and Urbanization. Also under MoEF there are twenty two programmes where SLEM is also an important one for land restoration progress. Shri T.P. Raghunath, IFS, Group Coordinator Research, delivered the Special address. Shri D. RajaSugunaSekar, Course Co-ordinator, provided an overview about the SLEM approaches in the country and the role of ICFRE in SLEM, the purpose and the expected outcome of the training programme. Dr. N. Krishnakumar, IFS, Director, IFGTB in his special address underlined the importance of conservation of Land and the approaches and strategies adopted in the conservation in forest dependent communities. He highlighted that in 1988 only 19% of forest cover was there. But as per today data, 23% of areas under forest cover. Globally, India has only 8% of land area, 2.3% of biodiversity, 4% is for Water bodies, 18% of cattle population, but the land availability for grazing is only 0.5%. He also highlighted that in 1997 per capita land availability was 0.89%,but today 0.27% according to 2011 data. The GDP percent from Industry contribution is 25% whereas from Agriculture, it is only 14%. He emphasized that today 33% are under urbanization. Whereas in 2035 it will reach 55% So he stressed that Strategies for scientific land use planning is the need of the hour and prerequisite for maintaining the biodiversity for the sustainable livelihood. Dr. P.A. Azeez, Director, SACON his inaugural address emphasized the need for a convergence approach in Land restoration and conservation. He highlighted that no land is a waste land until the economical hidden resources are brought out. He also said a comprehensive, holistic and conservation management plan should be followed for land restoration. Dr. S. Murugesan, Head, Bioprospecting Division proposed the vote of thanks.

The training programme included a mix of class room lectures and field visits relevant to the topic (Annexure attached)

The participants visited the Anaimalai Tiger Reserve (ATR) and Parambikulam Tiger Reserve (PTR) to gain firsthand experience on Land Restoration and Biodiversity Conservation and working of Eco development societies.

A Panel Discussion on selected topics such as

- Best Practices in Forest Land Management,
- Livelihood centric Forest Land use and policy for Sustainable development,
- Agricultural land use and other land uses
- Strategies and Technology for Restoration of Impaired Ecosystem.

has been organized for close interaction and exchange of thoughts among the participants. The Panel Discussion was chaired by Shri R.S. Prashanth, IFS, Head, and FLUCC Division. There was very good involvement and interactions from the side of participants during the entire course.

During the Valedictory, Dr. N. Krishnakumar, Director, IFGTB emphasized that as a consequence of incredible growth of population, development pressures, bioclimatic and socio economic changes per capita availability of natural resources like land, water and vegetation are declining in an alarming rate, which are also major causes of over exploitation of natural resources leading to desertification and land degradation. He has highlighted that an integrated approach to the problem of land degradation, linking agriculture and environment can be tackled to an extent by suitable policies that would internalize degradation into proper decision making. In the absence of appropriate policy and efforts, economic pressures on farmers to use more chemical fertilizers for maintaining growth momentum, has led to ecological degradation and economic loss for farmers, aggravating the crises in the Agricultural sector. He also stressed that there should be more policy support for organic farming.

Certificates were issued to the participants during the Valedictory Session.

Dr. Azeez inagurates the workshop

Training manual release

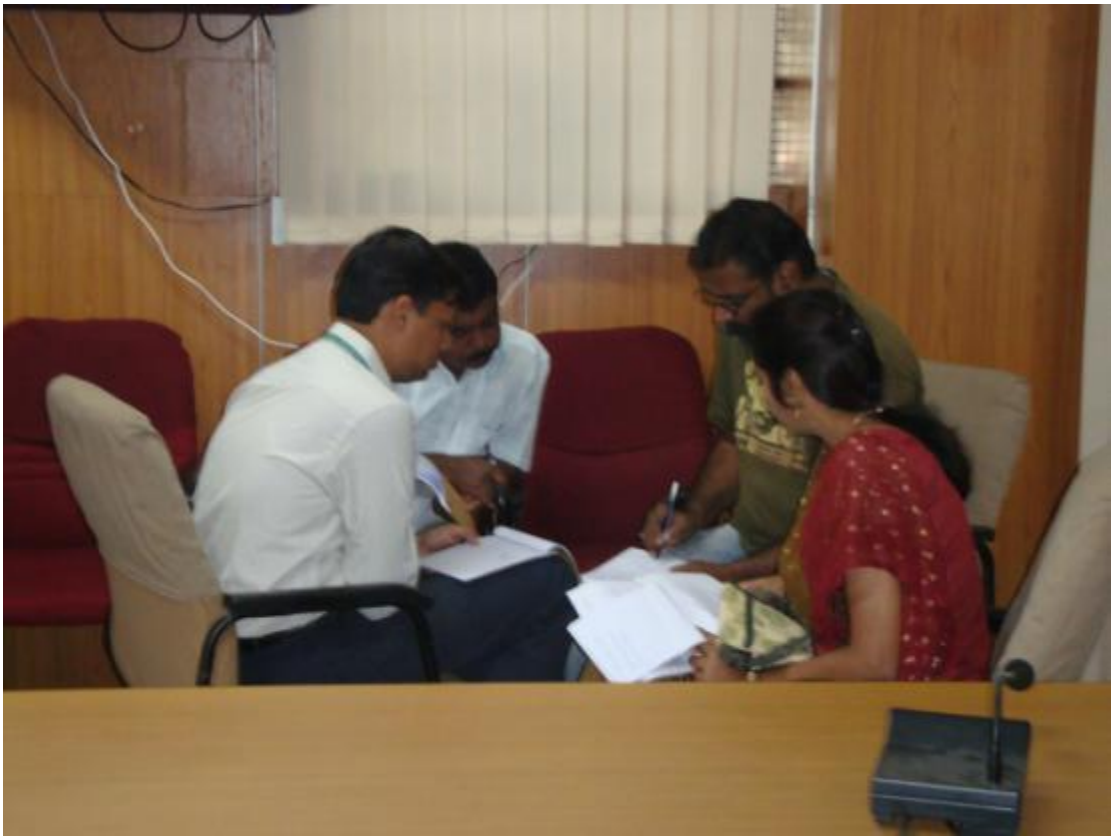
Interaction in Class Room

Interaction during Field visit

Intercation with Prambikulam wildlife warden

The Participants in the workshop

Active Group Discussion



Valediction and Distribution of Certificates