IFGTB commercializes an affordable technology on isolation of Nucleic acid

The technology on "Isolation of nucleic acid from plant tissues" developed at Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding, Coimbatore was successfully transferred to Rapid Genomics Solutions, an R&D company based at Coimbatore in a function held on 10 July 2014 at the Institute premises. The inventors of the technology are Dr. Modhumita Dasgupta and Dr. Radha Veluthakkal of IFGTB. The meeting was attended by scientists/ officers of IFGTB and Shri S.K. Viswanath, General Manager (Marketing), Rapid Genomics Solutions. While welcoming the participants, Dr. R. Yasodha, Head, Division of Plant Biotechnology, IFGTB expressed that it was the first product to be commercialized at IFGTB and considered it as a proud event for the Institute. Shri T.P. Raghunath, Group Coordinator (Research), IFGTB spoke on the importance of commercialization in R&D laboratories and explained that the key to any commercialization is innovation. He also highlighted that several innovations did not reach the public due to commercialization lags leading to obsoleteness of the technology. He stressed on the requirement for continuous innovations in research institutions.

Subsequently, Dr. Modhumita Dasgupta, Scientist IFGTB and co-inventor of the technology explained the competitive advantages of the technology over the existing technologies in the market. She informed that the technology was rapid, low cost and resulted in high recovery of both DNA and RNA in a single reaction. Additionally, she also mentioned that the technology did not involve the use of any bio-hazadous chemicals and was designed for difficult tissues especially from tree species. Further, she explained the process of commercialization and informed that the technology transfer was facilitated by Biotech Consortium India Ltd, New Delhi, a company promoted by Department of

Biotechnology, Government of India. It was further explained that the technology was transferred to Rapid Genomics Solutions on non exclusive basis and a tripartite license agreement was developed in consultation with IFGTB, BCIL and RGS.

The license agreement was signed by Dr. N. Krishna Kumar, Director, IFGTB and Shri S.K. Viswanath, GM (Marketing), RGS. This was followed by the handing over of the 'Technology Docket' to Shri Viswanath and reciprocated by handing over of the first instalment towards technology transfer to Dr. Krishna Kumar.

Subsequently, Dr. Krishna Kumar addressed the gathering and congratulated Dr. Modhumita Dasgupta for her efforts in effectively transferring the technology to a company. He explained that the present technology was developed in 2009 and the process of commercialization was initiated in 2011 with the support of BCIL. He stressed on the importance of commercialization in forestry sector and expressed that the forest genetic resources are an important source supporting the livelihood of populations. He also expressed that the commercialization prospects of non timber forest produce were enormous and urged that the Institute should involve in developing products useful for general masses. He expressed the immense social and ecological responsibility of forestry researchers and insisted that revenue generation through commercial use of forestry products is essential for sustainability.

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New technology to reduce cost, time of research, commercialised

Smaller scientific research institutes to benefit

He further mentioned that the Institute is working towards developing other products which would be commercialized in the future.

Shri S. K. Viswanath, GM (Marketing), RGS expressed his views in the perspective of a R&D company and mentioned that most of the products used in molecular biology research were imported in India, resulting in high cost. Hence, he felt that indigenous technologies need to be developed and marketed effectively to address this gap in research. He assured the Institute that the present technology would be launched in the market at the earliest and all efforts would be taken by the company to market the product. He also envisioned that the company would work towards up-grading the technology with the support of the Institute to facilitate automation.

The meeting ended with the vote of thanks by Dr. Modhumita Dasgupta.