

Visit of the team of UK Forestry Commission at ICFRE, Dehradun: Initiation of UK-India Collaborative FLR Project

The role of forests in ecological security is established beyond any doubts. However, the prevailing poverty and lack of resource access to people living in and around forest areas presents a great challenge for maintenance of goods and services from ecosystems. The impact of this pressure has severe and sometimes an irreversible damaging impact on the health of forest ecosystems. Thus, a more sustainable approach to use forest resources needs to be institutionalised. An UK-India collaborative project (**UK-India Forest Landscape Restoration Project**), under the umbrella of the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration (GPFLR), has been proposed to study the Forest Landscape Restoration efforts already in place in different parts of our country.

In this regard, a team of four experts from UK Forestry Commission, Great Britain, under Mr. Tim Rollinson, Director General Forestry Commission, comprising of Mr. Mike Dudley, Head International Policy, Forestry Commission, Dr. Chris Quine, Head Centre for Human and Ecological Sciences, Forest Research Agency and Mr. Mike Smith, Human and Ecological Science, Forest Research Agency, along with Mr. Arif Hussain, Programme Manager, UK-India Sustainable Development Dialogue, visited ICFRE from 19th October to 21st October 2010, to initiate discussion on this project.

Apart from ICFRE, this project has IGNFA Dehradun, FSI Dehradun, IIFM Bhopal and State Forest Departments of Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Orissa as technical collaborators.

On 19th October 2010, Director General ICFRE Dr. G. S. Rawat welcomed the UKFC team and other distinguished members. Thereafter, short presentations were made by ICFRE and FSI and the team had discussion with the technical experts of ICFRE and FSI. On 20th October 2010, there was presentation on FLR and ICFRE by Sh. Sandeep Tripathi, Dir (Research) wherein representatives of MoEF Dr. P.B. Gangopadhyay, Addl.DG (FC) and Shri A.M. Singh, DIG (SU); PCCF of Uttarakhand Dr. R. B. S. Rawat; and DFO Dehradun Ms. Meenakshi Joshi were also present. The detailed discussion on the FLR project was conducted by ICFRE team, headed by DG ICFRE Dr. G. S. Rawat, along with Director FRI Dr. S. S. Negi, Director (Research) Sh. Sandeep Tripathi, and other technical experts. Thereafter, the team visited the eco-restoration site of rock phosphate mine at Maldeota near Dehradun. After mining activity, the site

represented a barren landscape devoid of any soil, vegetation and soil fauna. The land restoration efforts started in 1982 and that site has been restored to the extent that it can now meet the local needs of fuel and fodder on a sustained basis. On 21st October 2010, the team had facility visits to FSI and Photo Gallery at FRI Dehradun. Thereafter, the team visited the riverine restoration site near Jollygrant. This restoration activity has been undertaken by the Uttarakhand Forest Department.



DG ICFRE addressing the team of UKFC





Team visiting mined restoration site at Maldeota

Team visiting the FRI Museum



The team highly appreciated the diverse and innovative efforts being undertaken in different parts of India for restoring different topological sites, effectively involving the local people. It has been principally agreed by UKFC for providing financial support to this project. The first phase will be of about five months, costing about ` **1.35 crores**, and this will lead to the documentation of Forest Landscape Restoration efforts being undertaken in different parts of our country, with specific details from the states of Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. This will be the base material for preparing the proposal for second phase that would include the details of such efforts and their potential of replication from other states of the country.