

Himalayan Forest Research Institute
Conifer campus, Panthaghati, Shimla- 171 013, Himachal Pradesh
Forestry Research in Western Himalayan Region of India
ICFRE-REGIONAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE
Venue: Virtual Conference organized by HFRI, Shimla
28th October, 2020

Himalayan Forest Research Institute, Shimla and Forest Research Institute, Dehradun organized “**Regional Research Conference**” under the guidance of ICFRE, Dehradun on 28th October, 2020 virtually at HFRI, Shimla. Approximately **100** delegates representing different organisations including State Forest Department of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, UHF, Nauni, Solan, SKUAST Jammu & Srinagar, IHBT Palampur, GBPNHE Mohal-Kullu, Himalayan Research Group (NGO), Shimla and other stakeholders from above states and UTs participated in the Conference. The Conference was organized to bring all the research organizations working in various fields of forestry at one platform to identify various research needs/issues being faced by the stakeholders and research organisations so that new research initiatives to address the issues are formulated. **Dr. Savita**, PCCF& HoFF, HP was the Chief Guest of the Inaugural Function and **Sh. A. S. Rawat**, DG, ICFRE presided over the function. **Sh. S. D. Sharma**, DDG (Research and Administration) and **Dr. Vimal Kothiyal**, ADG (Research & Planning), ICFRE were the other distinguished Guests of the Conference. Starting the proceedings of the Conference, **Dr. Rajesh Sharma**, GCR, HFRI, invited Dr. S.S. Samant, Director, HFRI, Shimla for his welcome address. Dr. S. S. Samant, Director, HFRI, Shimla welcomed the Chief Guest, DG, ICFRE, DDG (Research and Administration), other dignitaries and participants and thanked them for sparing their valuable time for being a part of this Conference. **Sh. S.D. Sharma, DDG (Research and Administration)**, ICFRE informed the participants about the conference and its genesis. He highlighted the significance of Northern Western Himalayan system which is unique for its topography, climatic conditions and biodiversity, but facing tremendous pressure due to various factors, increased incidences of diseases and pests and loss of habitat of species. He informed the delegates about ICFRE’s initiatives of National Action Plan on Forest Fires, REDD+ strategy for the country, DPR of 13 Major River Systems of India and All India Coordinated Research Projects funded by MoEF&CC. **Sh. A. S. Rawat**, DG, ICFRE in his presidential address called upon the delegates to make efforts to maintain sustainability of resources in view of the increased pressure on natural resources for societal needs, shift of species due to the effect of climate change, and livelihood of this particular region. The overdependence of local communities on natural resources has resulted in degradation of natural forest and therefore, sustainable management needs to be done.

Dr. Savita, PCCF& HoFF, HP informed that forestry research issues faced by Himachal Pradesh are also being faced by the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Informing the delegates about the target that the State Forest Department of Himachal Pradesh has to accomplish by 2030 to increase the forest cover from 27 % to 30 % for which 12000 ha to 14000 ha afforestation targets require quality planting stock of even lesser known species with higher survival rate. She also advocated development of sustainable harvesting protocol of major NTFP species growing in high altitude areas of Chamba, Kinnaur and Lahaul & Spiti in the natural habitat of Snow Leopard. She also emphasized to include at least 30% of fruit bearing species in plantation activity to minimize human wildlife conflict.

The technical session was chaired by Sh. S.D. Sharma, DDG (Research), ICFRE and co-Chaired by Dr. S. S. Samant, Director, HFRI, Shimla. During the technical session **Dr. Vimal Kothiyal**, ADG(R&P)

ICFRE presented the overview of forestry research programmes of ICFRE and recent initiatives and research highlights of ICFRE, Dehradun.

Dr. S. S. Samant, Director, HFRI, Shimla presented overview of research activities being carried out in state of Himachal Pradesh and Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. He highlighted the salient research achievements of the institute and flagged the forestry research issues concerning North-Western Himalayan region.

Dr. P. S. Rawat, Scientist-F and GCR (in-charge), FRI, Dehradun presented overview of research activities being carried out at FRI, Dehradun and invited Scientists of FRI, Dehradun to present the research work undertaken by them in the conference.

Shri. Tilak Raj Sharma (Research and Planning Wing, Sundernagar) Himachal Pradesh State Forest Department discussed about research status of Forest Department and suggested convergence and sharing of all research outcomes of various organisations of Himachal Pradesh so that forest department keeps itself abreast of the research done in the area.

Dr. Jitender Kumar Singh, CF (Res. circle) State Forest Research Institute, Jammu talked about the conservation of biodiversity, ex-situ & in-situ germplasm conservation, productivity of forests, bamboo as earning livelihood and income generation solution for economically marginal farmers in Jammu.

Dr. Meenu Sood, Head, Department of Forest Products, UHF, Nauni highlighted various research achievements of the college including education and research. She highlighted the agroforestry models and agro techniques developed by the University.

Dr. T.H. Masoodi, Dean (Forestry), SKUAST-Srinagar talked about the forestry research achievements of the university and deliberated upon various issues of forestry research being faced by the SKUAST. He stressed on the research need on ecosystem services in sacred natural sites, wild edible fruits, impact of climate change in region, shift in species range and ex-situ conservation of medicinal plants.

Dr. Lalit Mohan Gupta, Scientist & Head, SKUAST, Jammu, highlighted the key issues as unavailability of quality planting material of fast growing tree species and medicinal plants, unorganized marketing of medicinal plants and some legal issues in transportation and harvesting of plants.

Dr. Sanjay Uniyal, Head, Division of Environment Technology, CSIR-IHBT Palampur, talked about the research highlights of their organization with special reference to the work being done on conservation of medicinal plants, identification and categorization of Invasive Alien Species, successful method for management and mitigation of Lantana in HP.

Dr. K. S. Kanwal, Scientist, GBPNIHE, Kullu deliberated upon the research achievements of his organization and its achievements. He talked about the Biological Diversity and the need for its conservation in the light of changing climatic conditions. He stressed upon identification of elite planting material of selected temperate medicinal plants, mass multiplication, field demonstration and post harvesting processing and development of database on landscape level biodiversity and forest resources.

Dr. Lal Singh, Director, HRG, Shimla highlighted the work on solar panels and fodder scarcity and work done by his organization in livelihood activities.

Sh. Satnam Singh, CF Ludhiana, Punjab discussed about work of his organization regarding distribution of quality planting material of *Dalbergia sissoo* and *Melia dubia* to farmers and trainings imparted to them.

Prof. T.N. Lakhan Pal, retired Professor and **Dr. S.P. Bhardwaj**, retired Prof. & ex-VC appreciated the efforts of HFRI for adopting holistic approach by providing a common platform to all stakeholders to share their experience and key problems and stressed for its continuity.

DDG (Research and Administration), ICFRE in his concluding remark suggested to work on the themes/recommendations provided by the concerned stakeholders of the respective states, UT by

focusing on targets and a holistic action plan involving all the research institutions for sharing of responsibilities so as to realize the gains of increased productivity and conservation of resources. He informed that propagation and conservation of threatened species, biodiversity assessment, increasing survival percent of plantation area, development of sustainable harvesting protocol of medicinal plants, habitat improvement in high altitude areas, etc. are the key issue. Collaboration between ICFRE Institutes with IHBT (Palampur), GBPNiHE, Mohal Kullu, Dr. Yashwant Singh Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, Nauli, Solan, State Forest Departments and others should be strengthened. SFD/communities if have any issues regarding forestry research, kindly approach HFRI, Shimla as well as ICFRE, Dehradun.

Director, HFRI in his concluding remarks thanked all the participants for their valuable suggestions and recommendations. He urged that there should be a mechanism for the sharing of outcomes of the organisations and Departments so that all the organisations become updated with the forestry research. He assured that the HFRI will implement the recommendations in collaboration with other organisations and Departments.

The Conference ended with a formal vote of thanks by **Dr. Sandeep Sharma**, Sci. G, HFRI, Shimla to all the dignitaries, Guests, Resource Persons and distinguished participants of this one-day Conference.

GLIMPSES OF THE ICFRE-REGIONAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE




