

FES

FOUNDATION FOR ECOLOGICAL SECURITY

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# Our Mission

“As ‘ecological security’ is the foundation of sustainable and equitable development, the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) is committed to strengthening, reviving or restoring, where necessary, the process of ecological succession and the conservation of land, forest and water resources in the country.”

To this end FES:

WORKS towards the ecological restoration and conservation of land and water resources in the uplands and other eco-fragile, degraded and marginalised zones of the country, and, to set in place the processes of co-ordinated human effort and governance to this end and provide relief to the poor, in particular;

WORKS either directly, or with and through a range of democratic village institutions, their federal bodies, and civil society organisations, set up through initiatives that are ecologically sustainable, socially and economically equitable;

ENSURES the ecological integrity of all efforts by working, as far as possible, with entire landscapes and with all the interrelated communities within it, through a range of arrangements on their land and aquatic resources, whether Commons, Public or Private;

WORKS FOR AND PROMOTES stability of the ecosystems through the protection and restoration of biological diversity, including the diversity of species, age diversity, genetic variability as well as that of structural composition;

COLLABORATES with Panchayat Raj and other democratic village institutions, as well as appropriate civil society organisations, in their efforts to fulfil the objectives of the society, and to provide technical and financial assistance to them.



# Our Organisation

Registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI 1860, the Foundation for Ecological Security was set up in 2001 to reinforce the massive and critical task of ecological restoration in the country.

The central character of our efforts lie in intertwining principles of nature conservation and local self-governance in order to accelerate efforts on ecological restoration, as well as improve the living conditions of the poor.

## Board of Governors

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Jagdeesh Rao  
(Ex-officio Member Secretary)



# commons



“ One of the greatest challenges is in looking at global Commons, the debate on climate change; the regional Commons, issues on rivers, management of rivers and aquifers; and the local Commons, the management of forests. ”

**Shri Jairam Ramesh**

*The then Union Minister of State for Environment and Forests  
Chief Guest*



“ There are No Panaceas for the problems facing Common Pool Resources across the world... Policy makers around the world ought to adopt a polycentric approach to the problems on development. ”

**Dr. Elinor Ostrom**

*Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences (2009)  
(in her Inaugural Keynote)*

## 13<sup>th</sup> World Commons Meet in India

### Sustaining Commons Sustaining Our Future

WHEN in 2009, we decided to host the 13th Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC), we saw in it a good opportunity to draw global attention to the Commons in India as also our recently-launched ‘Commons Initiative’. The Conference was to be organised in South Asia for the first time and, in a departure from the past, would be hosted by a practitioner organisation – Foundation for Ecological Security (FES).

Less than two years later, the five-day Conference opened in Hyderabad (India) on January 10, 2011. It was inaugurated by Nobel Laureate Dr. Elinor Ostrom with Shri Jairam Ramesh, the then Union Minister of State for Environment and Forests, as the Chief Guest.



The South Asia Exchange Programme (SAEP) and Practitioner Exchange Programme (PEP) with support from IDRC and NABARD respectively, brought together young scholars and practitioners from SAARC countries and China as part of a special programme that helped them gain valuable understanding of the complexities in Commons management and governance through workshops and field visits specially designed for them, and the interactions at the Conference.

IASC 2011 took a critical look at the interface between human and natural systems – the Commons in particular – to build on our understanding of the inter-connectedness that sustains life, collective action and our future. The papers were rich in diversity and were from disciplines like ecology, economics, social sciences, legal aspects; they dealt with the physical common resources, ranging from forests to fisheries to water resources to pastures and protected areas to coastal and lagoon Commons. Not to forget Information and Cultural Commons, genetic resources, patents and climate!

Of the five days of the Conference, four were taken up with academic sessions, each day having about two Keynote Addresses, paper presentations and a Policy Forum. One day was fully dedicated to field visits planned in accordance with the various thematic focal areas of the Conference. Regional and global experiences in advocacy for a wide range of Common Pool Resources were



## IASC 2011 at a Glance

- > Over 800 participants
- > Representatives from 69 different countries
- > Inaugural Keynote by Dr. Elinor Ostrom, Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences (2009); Chief Guest - Shri Jairam Ramesh, Union Minister of State for Environment and Forests, Govt. of India
- > Keynotes by Mr. Ashish Kothari, Dr. Bina Agarwal, Mr. David Bollier, Mr. Herman Rosa Chávez and Dr. Ruth Meinzen-Dick
- > 460 Papers, 15 Posters and 11 Videos presented
- > South Asia Exchange Programme - Practitioners Exchange Programme
- > 11 Pre-Conference workshops
- > 10 Policy Forums, 2 Panel Discussions
- > 15 single day field visits, 1 multi day field visit
- > Book releases
- > Exhibition



The Conference served as a platform for the launch of four books/publications, each adding valuably to existing knowledge on Commons.

discussed during the Policy forums. These forums also engaged with themes like pastoralism, forests, water and Knowledge Commons. Contributions were invited from some Indian State governments/departments as well as other countries with functioning policies, legal and institutional frameworks so as to throw light on the need for a Commons Policy in India at National and State levels.

**Hosted at the Chowmahalla Palace of Hyderabad,** the Banquet marked a cultural high-point, with the regal venue contributing in no small measure to the grandeur of the evening. The event was marked by an enthralling cultural performance by ‘Manganiyar’, a music group from Rajasthan.

The participation of well-known researchers, practitioners and political figures and the Policy Forums provided plenty of opportunities for interaction, debate and discussion. Some of the important areas that were discussed include:

- > Links between the Commons and climate change as highlighted by the Ministers for the environment and other conference papers;



# commons

- > The Policy Forums highlighted the importance of the Commons for food security and livelihoods – not just for the environment. In the Indian context, this included discussions of the links between Mahatama Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and the management of the Commons and how they can be mutually synergistic;
- > Links between natural resources and Knowledge Commons, and their commonalities at the theoretical and practical levels.

**On the evening of 14<sup>th</sup>January, 2011, FES thanked every individual and group responsible for making the Conference a success. As the sun went down, flying kites and lanterns in the true spirit of the traditional Makarsankranti festival seemed to be the perfect way to bid adieu.**

The Conference truly emerged as a knowledge exchange platform, drawing the interest and participation of practitioners, academicians and policy makers alike, who came together to share and learn from their experiences in collective action and local self-governance. Need for a ‘Commons Movement’ was stressed – a need to develop new narratives to draw increased attention to the Commons, and to go beyond academic discourse and engage with a wider public.





## Cornerstones

If conventional approaches to development could deliver our nation and our people from poverty, the economic growth of the last two decades would have seen an India completely rid of poverty and a vastly improved quality of life for most of her billion plus citizens. Instead, we see an improvement in the material quality of life of the select few, with the majority bearing the brunt of the tragic degradation of their natural surroundings.

Human society is today facing an ecological crisis of its own making. A crisis, which would drastically alter not only our lives in the immediate future but also place an unprecedented burden on future generations. Rapid loss of biodiversity, disappearing forests, rising sea levels, increased temperatures, severe storms and flooding on the one hand and depleting water supplies on the other... these are but a few of the disquieting developments symptomatic of the failing health of our ecosystems.



In the face of this ecological crisis, provisions of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act (FRA), the 73rd Amendment, the Right to Information (RTI) and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) have created platforms to work on ecological restoration, decentralised governance and improved livelihoods. The FRA provides the space for tribal communities to claim, protect and use community forestland and is a first step to giving local communities a stake in forest and wildlife conservation. The 73rd Amendment, which devolves powers and functions to the constitutionally mandated Panchayats, provides opportunities to build strong decentralised governance that is informed by the ecological imperatives of the area. Furthermore, enabling provisions of the RTI and MGNREGA provide enabling contexts to work on strengthening transparency, accountability and ecologically sustainable rural livelihoods.

On a world stage that is dominated by economic thinking, our effort is to swing the spotlight onto an ecological agenda and development from a conservation and social justice perspective.

# Ecological Restoration For a Resilient Rural Infrastructure

WE believe that in rural livelihood systems, infrastructure must first be understood as soil, water, nutrients, biomass and biodiversity as they are fundamental for the viability of farming systems and thereby the rural economy. In such a context, our efforts lie in approximating natural processes in restoring degraded lands and stressed ecosystems.

Much of our efforts take us to the dryland regions of the country where land degradation, depletion of biomass and biodiversity and lowered groundwater levels have severely stressed ecosystems. In such settings, we promote natural regeneration, and take advantage of the sub-tropical climate and the abundance of rootstock in each region. At the same time, we have to contend with the reality that degradation of natural resources today is rapidly outpacing nature's own ability to regenerate and re-establish itself.

The landscapes we work on are as diverse as scrub lands, tidal mudflats, open to dense forests, ravines, grasslands, farm fields and water bodies. In some areas, soil and moisture conservation measures have resulted in marked improvements in groundwater levels, biomass productivity and biodiversity – leading thereon to increased crop productivity, double cropping, fodder and water availability. On the other hand, we also observe irresponsible practices such as growing



**We consider human society as part of a larger ecological whole which harbours many other forms of life. Our efforts are directed towards reviving water, nutrient and energy flows and conserving biodiversity across landscapes so as to provide enabling conditions for stable production systems and for more forms of life to thrive.**

## Future Trends

- > **Restore forests, grasslands and wetlands to serve critical ecological functions that sustain local livelihoods.**
- > **Close in on ecological measures for adapting to growing climate variability.**
- > **Highlight the value of birds, insects, amphibians and reptiles in maintaining the robustness of agriculture and forest ecosystems.**
- > **Build bridges between conservation sciences and conventional approaches in natural resource management.**
- > **Share knowledge on both the potential and judicious use of biomass, biodiversity and water resources with local communities.**

water-intensive crops in dryland areas, large-scale sand mining on river beds, deforestation to promote mining – practices which call for collective discussion and action.

### Assisting Natural Regeneration

We start out by identifying contiguous stretches of land, maybe the catchment of a small river, or several adjacent macro-watersheds, or a range of hills. This gives us the advantage of working with natural boundaries. The next step is to map the landscape and build a profile of what lies on the surface and what lies below: species diversity, soil quality, geology, surface water availability and flows, groundwater availability and the like.

It is important to engage with all the communities in the area. We assist them in drawing up plans to improve soil and moisture regimes and create a micro-climate conducive to vegetative growth. We explore means and mechanisms to control indiscriminate use of natural resources such as water or biomass or decline in biodiversity. We devise ways to protect native plant species and their habitat where these have resurfaced due to conservation efforts.

We undertake biodiversity assessments and conservation initiatives in biodiversity-rich ecosystems, and highlight their significance to the community. We then work towards integrating these components in the larger land use and natural resource management plans of the area.

We also collaborate with other agencies in scaling up operations and in searching for more enduring or innovative solutions to safeguard natural resources.

Kumar Rupam



Vaibhav Bhatia



**Working in areas marked by considerable human presence, ecological restoration for us necessarily means assisting the village communities in planning for conservation action and taking judicious water and land use decisions.**

# Community Institutions For a Vibrant Institutional Architecture

COMMON Property Regimes give the rural poor access to a share in common good, which might otherwise be channelised into the hands of a few and, more often than not, the powerful. Community institutions enable a code of locally agreed behaviour – a code that both encourages positive action and keeps individual exploitation in check.

We work with a variety of village-level institutional forms depending on the legal status of the land, such as the Village Forest Management and Protection Committees, Grazing Land Development Committees, Panchayats and Van Panchayats, Tree Growers' Cooperatives and Gramya Jungle Committees. Such institutions have the advantage of being more focused, and can better serve managerial functions at the habitation-level in remedying ecological degradation. However, the constitutional recognition that Panchayats enjoy, especially with regard to custodial rights over natural resources, marks them out as the most appropriate institution for governance of natural resources. By nesting the user-based institutions under the larger umbrella of the Panchayats, it becomes possible to draw on the strengths of both kinds of institutional arrangements: the smaller committees for their effective role in executing activities and the larger Panchayats for local-level governance.



When resources are shared across habitations, landscape-level and collective arrangements are required for their management and use. However, juxtaposing these with administrative boundaries and architecture continue to pose challenges.

## Future Trends

- > **Energise institutions** such as water users or forest protection associations that are designed around Common Pool Resources.
- > **Nest user institutions** within Panchayats so as to gain from the constitutional mandate that Panchayats enjoy.
- > **Further devolve** the Panchayat's decision-making powers on natural resources to habitation-level Gram Sabhas so as to help sustain commitment to conservation.
- > **Conceive groundwater** as a common pool resource and arrive at institutional arrangements on water rights based on hydrology and equity considerations.
- > **Search for institutional** options that can segregate merchandising and conservation objectives. Screen operative mechanisms such that the poor do not get dispossessed but rather, are insulated from market uncertainties.

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Be it urban, rural or tribal, hierarchies are commonplace in all societies, dispossessing the poor and women from an equal say. It is imperative to nurture democratic processes in both traditional and emerging institutions to ensure at least an equitable access to resources.

# Enhancing Livelihoods

## Economic Benefits within Ecological Thresholds

THE Millennium Ecosystem Assessment clearly states that the degradation of ecosystems is harming many of the planet's poorest communities and at times is the principal factor causing poverty – often shifting costs from one group of people to another. It goes on to warn that unless these problems are addressed immediately, the benefits of ecosystems to future generations too would diminish greatly.

Our work finds itself in the midst of a long standing debate between those who argue that the conservation of nature is a value that needs to be pursued even at the expense of human livelihoods and others who argue that access to natural resources is integral to the basic right to livelihood. Another form this debate often assumes is whether poverty alleviation would lead to the conservation of natural resources or vice versa. However, in a context where farming systems are linked inextricably with nature and natural resources, we believe that conservation and securing local livelihoods go hand-in-hand; also, that there cannot be any singular prescription that fits all areas uniformly. We address both issues without pitching one against the other.

### Spaces of the Poor

Working in substantially populated areas around forests and common lands, our interventions



While on the one hand, degradation of natural resources causes impoverishment, tragically on the other, the degradation of natural resources is also caused by the poverty of the poor.

## **Future Trends**

focus on strengthening the inter-linkages within the various elements of the ecosystem. As most of the contemporary initiatives on livelihood promotion do not take into account the threshold limits of ecosystems and suggest an exploitative trend that is untenable in the long run, in our search for suitable livelihood initiatives we strive to highlight the principles and practices of designing natural resource-based livelihood options that are ecologically sound and economically rewarding.

At the same time, we emphasise institutional mechanisms, which make the community central to the decision-making process. Pro-poor institutional arrangements in terms of rules of use and sharing of benefits strengthen the livelihoods of the marginalised sections and, to an extent, also empower them politically.

New market opportunities that tend to treat common lands as 'wastelands' could serve the interests of ascending economic groups within villages. They tend to 'privatise' the natural resources that were otherwise accessible to the poor, dispossessing them further. In such circumstances, our efforts are aimed at ensuring tenure security for the poor and evolving institutional arrangements that safeguard their entitlements.

To the extent possible, we leverage government programmes to add value to farm-based activities, improve access to markets, and thereby, augment household incomes.

Vaibhav Bhatia



Latika George



**Unless explicitly articulated, dominant thinking in natural resource management discourages local use dispossessing those dependent on the resources for their very survival. Efforts at conservation must also engage people on judicious use.**

> **Facilitate development** of a well-informed vision at the Panchayat level – a perspective plan which focuses on reviving the ecological balance, improving productivity of the farming systems and tilting governance to benefit the poor and deprived.

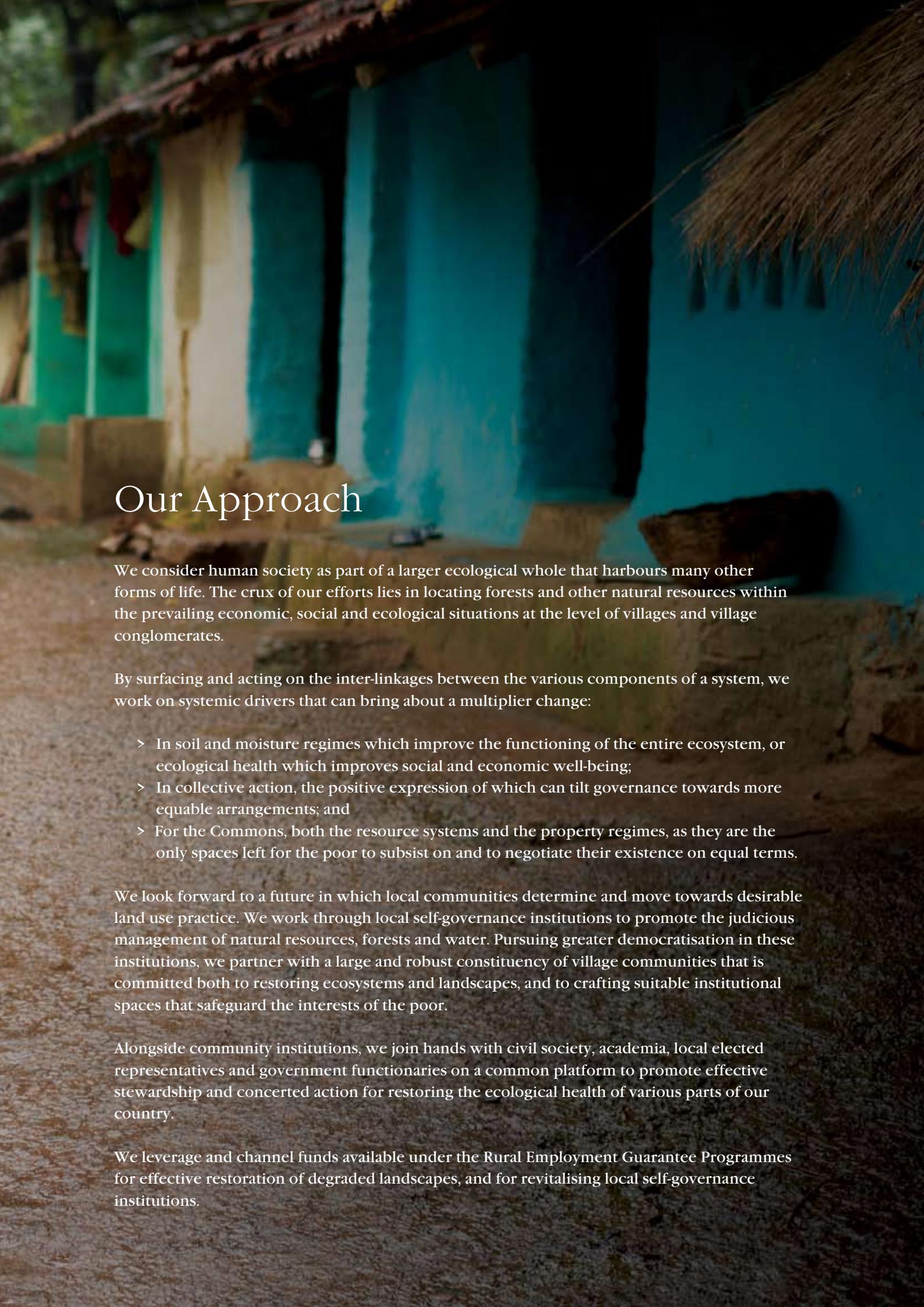
> **Cultivate a set of** local volunteers to take on the stewardship of the area, enabling better representation and voicing of the interests of local communities.

> **Assist local** communities in developing a cadre of skilled persons from within to take advantage of government and other programmes aimed at strengthening livelihoods and incomes.

> **Engage actively** with implementation of MGNREGA, that is, leverage its focus on creating durable assets for the community through investments in the local natural resource base, and its potential to strengthen democratic decentralisation.



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## Our Approach

We consider human society as part of a larger ecological whole that harbours many other forms of life. The crux of our efforts lies in locating forests and other natural resources within the prevailing economic, social and ecological situations at the level of villages and village conglomerates.

By surfacing and acting on the inter-linkages between the various components of a system, we work on systemic drivers that can bring about a multiplier change:

- In soil and moisture regimes which improve the functioning of the entire ecosystem, or ecological health which improves social and economic well-being;
- In collective action, the positive expression of which can tilt governance towards more equitable arrangements; and
- For the Commons, both the resource systems and the property regimes, as they are the only spaces left for the poor to subsist on and to negotiate their existence on equal terms.

We look forward to a future in which local communities determine and move towards desirable land use practice. We work through local self-governance institutions to promote the judicious management of natural resources, forests and water. Pursuing greater democratisation in these institutions, we partner with a large and robust constituency of village communities that is committed both to restoring ecosystems and landscapes, and to crafting suitable institutional spaces that safeguard the interests of the poor.

Alongside community institutions, we join hands with civil society, academia, local elected representatives and government functionaries on a common platform to promote effective stewardship and concerted action for restoring the ecological health of various parts of our country.

We leverage and channel funds available under the Rural Employment Guarantee Programmes for effective restoration of degraded landscapes, and for revitalising local self-governance institutions.

# Forests in a Landscape

## A System within Systems

FORESTS represent the second largest land use in India after agriculture. Today, they cover 23.84% of the overall landmass of 329 million hectares.

Almost 75% of India's farmers are marginal or small landholders and follow a mixed farming system of growing crops and raising livestock, with forests and other common lands being the major sources of fodder. Local people

shrubs, grasses and lianas together with a rich complement of fauna.

In India, if we disregard the area under plantations, the area under natural forests has been shrinking by 1.5-2.7% each year! With about 37% of the rural population dependent on the forests for some part of their livelihood, the degradation of forests entails severe deprivation for some 275 million people.

Kumar Rupam



Perceiving forests as a part of the landscape and thereby evolving appropriate land use arrangements offers the scope of assigning diverse objectives of preservation, conservation and exploitation to different parts of the landscape.

also depend on forests and common lands for fuel wood, timber, food, medicine, drinking water for themselves and their animals, and other domestic requirements. The collection of Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) is a major source of forest income in rural India. An estimated 11.8 million people across the country are involved in head-loading firewood, mainly as a source of daily income.

Plantations are a poor replacement to natural forests which support a wide variety of plants,

### Forests for Water

Forests and other Commons need to be maintained for the ecological functions and services they provide, the biodiversity they harbour, and to mitigate the harmful effects of greenhouse gases. Key ecological functions such as improved transfer of nutrients, longer periods of water flows and retention of moisture, better pollination and pest control directly help improve farm productivity and incomes.

## Future Trends

Forests and streams cut across habitations and so do groundwater aquifers and the birds and insects that help pollinate crops and predate pests. The grazing lands that a village frequents could actually fall within the boundaries of other villages. Moreover, social relationships and economic transactions are also not confined to habitations and extend to neighbouring villages.

In every location where we are present, we work with every community inhabiting contiguous stretches along a watercourse or range of forest-hills. We highlight the linkages between forests and other Commons, and associated production systems in the landscape – agriculture, livestock-keeping and fisheries through systemic drivers such as soil, moisture, nutrients, biomass and biodiversity.

The spread of resources, natural and production systems, and the social and economic interactions of the inhabitants with forests, land and water necessitate a broader view where forests must be seen as a part of the larger landscape. Locating forests and other Commons within the larger ecological, social and economic setting offers the scope to arrive at arrangements which can balance the interests of preservation, conservation and exploitation of natural endowments.

Developmental efforts, administered by different arms of the government, tend to be fragmented or piecemeal and at times even work at cross-purposes. Umbrella institutional arrangements are called for, that span across habitation and administrative domains, and take into account customary means of use and access.

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Susanta Kumar Rout



**The viability of forest ecosystems depends upon the social, economic and other land use drivers that prevail in the area, necessitating a larger overview. As forests serve various ecological functions and services, forest conservation could draw a larger constituency if it is aligned with the objectives of water conservation and agricultural productivity.**

# Farming and Farming Systems

## The Value of Inter-connectedness

WE realise that it is untenable to view elements of a system in isolation and that it is in the inter-connectedness that the viability of each, as well as the whole, exists. We also realise that natural processes are cyclical in nature and that, to the extent possible, our work should be guided by strengthening such processes rather than focusing on the linear progression of individual elements.

Meeting the future demands of food grains – estimated at 280 million tonnes by 2020 – would require a step up in the growth rate of food production with rainfed agriculture contributing at least 40% of the additional demand. However, the last few decades of predominant attention to intensification of agriculture has left rainfed agriculture suffering in the rain shadow of the Green Revolution.

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**While the dominant thinking concentrates on intensification of agriculture and higher production and thereby increased returns to the farmers, 'ecologically sound farming' retains soil moisture, aids pollination and keeps pests under check, saving valuable cash expenditure of farmers who are usually under distress.**

However, farmers and their farming systems in rainfed areas offer an array of survival and production options. The most striking feature of rainfed farming is the diversity of agricultural activities with over 34 crops cultivated in a year (besides significant species of livestock) as compared to four or five in irrigated conditions. Conditioned to scarcities and the vagaries of nature, rainfed agriculture and rainfed livelihoods exhibit strong elements of resilience.

Intensification of agriculture and animal husbandry has brought about significant changes in cropping patterns, reduced the number of crops, even eliminating some significant traditional varieties, raised use of fertilisers and pesticides to inordinate levels, depleted groundwater and impaired soil health. It has brought in a considerable reliance on systems and technologies that are not necessarily compatible with the agro-ecological contexts. It has also promoted a thinking that unnecessarily separates the otherwise

## Future Trends

seamlessly connected farming practices and rural livelihoods.

### Coupled Natural and Human Systems

Our work with land, water and people is governed by a deep understanding of inter-relationships – inter-relationships between natural and human systems, different ecosystems within a landscape, and different elements within an ecosystem. We value not only the inter-linkages between forests, water and agriculture, and Commons, livestock and agriculture, but also between ecological, social and economic dimensions.

By choice, we work in areas where agriculture and livestock production are predominantly rainfed in nature. In India, rainfed areas are spread over 200 million hectares and constitute 62% of the geographical area

In such contexts, we work on forests, grazing lands, water bodies and farmlands through systemic drivers such as soil, moisture, nutrients, pollinators and biodiversity – focusing on strengthening inter-linkages within various elements of the farming system. Parallelly, we assist village communities in crafting and strengthening community institutions for local self-governance, catalysing collective action and making farming activity or local self-governance the prerogative of the community.

By working on the systemic elements of both the biophysical and socio-institutional aspects of village life, we strive to catalyse collective action, access economic opportunity, and add to the resilience of rural endeavour and landscapes.

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A better appreciation of the inter-connectedness of various components of the landscape like forests, water bodies and farm holdings, or commons, livestock and farmlands helps build on spatial and temporal characteristics, which are critical for the resilience of farm production systems and for the poor to cope with vulnerabilities.

# Working with Panchayats

## Local Voices and Local Visions

IN recent times, multiple factors have combined to create an environment favourable to public spending on ecological restoration: new policy initiatives from the Government, increasing availability of public funds for village-level development, better appreciation of the strengths of decentralised natural resource management, and a perceptible openness on the part of the Government to partner with credible organisations.

ecological services, Panchayats can develop natural resource management plans that value these inter-linkages and optimise benefits for both the environment and rural livelihoods. Furthermore, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), introduced six years ago, serves to simultaneously democratise the functioning of the Panchayats and makes available funds to translate their visions of local development.

Shreya Mitra



We often hear people lamenting on the poor functioning of Panchayats or their politicisation. On the parallel, other institutions like user groups are promoted; equally politicised, these institutions end up bypassing the Panchayats. Unless adequate powers are devolved and investments made in building their capacities to plan, execute and monitor themselves, the functioning of Panchayats will remain, by and large, on paper.

These very opportunities pose fresh challenges for village-level institutions such as the Panchayat – namely, to voice a collective stand, draw up structured action plans, be transparent in their transactions, and be accountable to their constituencies.

The Panchayat with its constitutional backing and mandate of universal franchise, is ideally positioned to manage local natural resources. In a rural environment, where people's livelihoods are inextricably linked to

User groups such as Village Forest Management and Protection Committees, Grazing Land Development Committees, etc. are better organised to manage natural resources at the habitation-level as well as effectively oversee the maintenance of a particular resource. These institutions, when nested under the overall governance framework of the Panchayat could provide the setting to deepen the democratic functioning of the Panchayats and also enable them to address issues that transgress

## Future Trends

### > Streamline interactions

between Panchayats and user/village institutions to help draw long-term plans for the development of natural resources, recognise customary practices of land use and ensure security of tenure.

### > Strengthen Panchayats and

equip them to make informed decisions based on principles of conservation, equity and economic opportunity.

### > Reinforce overall good governance mechanisms (democratic principles, transparency, accountability and non-partisanship and space for the poor) at the Panchayat-level enabling them to handle public funds responsibly.

### > Work within the legal framework to mainstream natural resource governance in Panchayats through Natural Resource Management/Biodiversity Management/Production Committees at village and Panchayat-level.

village boundaries. If left to function outside the Panchayats they may serve a limited purpose of managing a particular resource and actually undermine the governance function that the Panchayats are enshrined to perform.

### Crafting Institutional Designs

In all the areas that we are present, we assist habitations and the Panchayats to express their visions of local development. Where we are formally nominated by the district administration, our support extends to a larger area and helps shape landscape-level action at various institutional tiers.

We assist in creation of cadres of rural volunteers from the community, who assist village institutions and Panchayats in articulating a vision of development, which is ecologically sustainable and socially equitable.

We also help a cadre of para-workers in honing their technical and professional skills so as to provide services to Panchayats and villages in implementing government and other ongoing programmes.

We promote multi-actor platform at the landscape-level with representatives of communities, government personnel, NGOs, interested citizens at the level of Blocks or *Taluks* to articulate and steer issues related to judicious use of natural resources. We plan to set up ‘information and services hubs’ to make information available for informed decisions on natural resource management.

SS Singh



Joshin Jose



Nesting natural resource governance as a critical function of the Panchayats, which are the constitutionally recognised form of local self-governance, has the potential of improving the ecological health of a good portion of land that is held in common. As Panchayats are mostly at the level of conglomerate of villages, it is necessary that management of natural resources be devolved to the habitation-level.

# Tenure over Common Lands

## Security Heightens Commitment

COMMON lands are repositories of biodiversity, ensure water and nutrient flows and add resilience to farming systems. Owing to their shared character and the consequent governance regimes that emerge from managing resources that are held in common, the Commons are central to reviving institutional mechanisms that energise collective action and check undesirable individual behaviour.

Secure tenure over resources is important to ensure sustained commitment towards their conservation, and to incentivise investment and increase productivity. In order to curtail injudicious trends in land use, we must arrive at regulatory arrangements where collective decisions on land use determine or guide decisions of individual land owners. Decisions on ideal land use should be independent from discussion on land ownership.

Kumar Rupam



**Tenurial arrangements on Commons are guided by decades of customary patterns of use that extend within and across villages. While pooling the resources provides benefits larger than the sum of the parts, it is essentially in the better governance of resources that the poor may stand to benefit.**

Over the last half century, however, there has been a decline of as much as 31-55% in the area of common lands. This decline can be attributed to the breakdown of local institutions, a growing populace, fragmentation of landholdings, environmental degradation and the lack of an enabling policy framework. In some areas of the country, ambiguity in tenurial arrangements over Common Pool Resources ranks high on the list of primary causes of ecological degradation.

A secure tenure must be seen as both a prerequisite to, and an outcome of, collective action. When passed on by the State, it implies devolution of political power as against merely managerial responsibilities. Moreover, given that rural society is also characterised by hierarchies, most initiatives tend to be seized or cornered by the powerful and moneyed. Therefore, efforts towards establishing a secure tenure must be made integral to the larger process of building democratic institutions for governance of the resources. The absence

## Future Trends

of secure tenure arrangements and appropriate village institutions result in the neglect of valuable natural resources, the restoration of which could hold promise for critical long-term benefits, often of irreplaceable value.

Together, secure tenure, strong community institutions and resilient ecological infrastructure could make invaluable contributions to food security, poverty alleviation and coping with climate variability.

### Claiming for Commons

We are continuously involved in efforts to secure rights of use and ownership over resources for user-based institutions created at the village and habitation-level. We have entered into Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with some State Governments to lease revenue wastelands to the communities on a long-term basis.

In several areas, efforts are being made to appropriately implement provisions for community forest rights under the Forest Rights Act. We continue to engage with Governments on Joint Forest Management (JFM) arrangements so as to improve the tenure over the produce and land.

In locations where communities have obtained tenure over common lands, there has been an overall improvement in the vegetative cover, groundwater levels (if supported by favourable geological features) leading to benefits such as increases in the level of biomass as well as in fodder for cattle and small ruminants, and area under double cropping.

> **Facilitate formation** and evolution of village institutions around the Commons by helping to define governance structures, roles and responsibilities, and assist in obtaining lease for Common lands.

> **Build capacity** of village institutions and their collectives to interpret existing policy and procedures involved in accessing tenure over land and produce. Further the discussions and decision-making to ensure the representation of the poor and women.

> **Invest time and money** in technologies both for mapping and claiming the Commons.

> **Facilitate efforts** of local communities to build local and regional platforms, which bring together members of village institutions, civil society representatives, academia and government functionaries to take stewardship of the natural wealth of the area.

Sunil Kumar



Pankaj Vallabh



While village communities do look forward to recognition of their rights of access and control from neighbouring villages and from State authorities, it is essentially the robust and engaging arrangements within the village that contribute to better functioning of Commons.

# Energising NREGA

## A Step towards Distributive Justice

THE National Rural Employment Guarantee Act or NREGA (later named Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) offers considerable opportunities and funding to Panchayats for natural resource management. A rights-based Act, with provisions for minimum wages, labour intensive work, and equal pay for both men and women, MGNREGA is a step in the path towards distributive justice.

that the community determines their developmental needs and in the process also revitalises their local decision-making process. Being embedded in the Panchayati Raj system, it has the potential to give a much-needed push in democratising local governance.

In the year 2010-11, about Rs. 400 trillion was spent in India on MGNREGA, of which about Rs. 300 trillion was possibly to have been spent

Photo © Mark Katzman. Used with kind permission.



**The implementation of MGNREGA through the Panchayati Raj Institutions offers a unique programme where issues of ecological restoration, strengthening rural livelihoods and democratising local governance can be worked upon simultaneously. Although it is criticised for its leakages, we must remember that it is perhaps the first time that the funds are directly reaching this level, demanding attention for institutional innovations.**

In the rural context, livelihoods can be made sustainable when inter-linkages between various ecosystems and elements within the ecosystems are nurtured and a systems approach adopted. MGNREGA provides an opportunity to work in this direction by allocating funds on a long-term basis for soil and moisture conservation, re-vegetation and natural resource management in general.

Having made Panchayats the main planning and implementing agency, the Act envisages

on restoring degrading natural resources on common and public land, and rightly so. It is imperative that such a huge financial investment be backed up by appropriate institutional investments as well. In our opinion, the policy imperatives are: (a) the devolution of management and governance of common lands to Gram Sabhas/Panchayats and the fourth tier where appropriate, (b) appropriate tenure arrangements with such institutions so that the constituent village communities can

## Future Trends

make secure investments of their efforts and benefit from accessing the produce from the Commons, and (c) a long-term programme architecture to restore the degraded lands in a purposive manner.

### More than a Just Wage

We assist Panchayats to integrate their visions for development with MGNREGA's, and collaborate with like-minded organisations and decision-makers towards better implementation of the Act.

At the village-level, efforts are made to generate wider understanding of the provisions of MGNREGA and the community's rights under the Act through *chetna yatras* or awareness drives, popular media and information kiosks.

We help build a group of local resource persons in villages who can assume stewardship of the area, assist in planning and implementation processes, and raise awareness of the community to access its rights under MGNREGA.

We work towards establishing transparent systems for democratic decision-making, and effective implementation and monitoring of the programme through social audit procedures, vigilance committees, payment mechanisms, and the like. To realise the maximum potential from the Act, we try to converge several manual activities into a programmatic mode such as watershed development programmes which are purposeful and long-term in nature.

Guaranteed employment in the rural areas and the creation of productive assets under MGNREGA contribute to poverty alleviation, strengthen livelihoods and reduce distress migration.

Bijay Kumar Toppo



Photo © Mark Katzman. Used with kind permission.



With our eyes set on improving the functioning of MGNREGA, we are conceiving an institutional arrangement, 'NREGA Watch', which would have the essential elements such as long-term plans determined by local communities, sharing progress and expenditure in public platforms, evolving platforms for judicious planning and better stewardship.

### > Build the capacity of

Panchayats and other village institutions to prepare perspective-based plans, provide technical support for participatory and transparent implementation, and introduce monitoring systems for better governance of natural resources.

### > Improve livelihoods through

the creation of productive assets and sustained opportunities for guaranteed employment, to alleviate poverty and reduce distress migration.

### > Reinforce the village-government interface by involving all concerned agencies, research bodies, civil society organisations and village institutions so as to collectively plan the management of natural resources.

### > Supplement the Rajiv Gandhi Soochna Kendras with information on subjects like biodiversity, geo-hydrology and landscape perspectives.



Photo © Mark Katzman. Used with kind permission.

# Strategic Overview

With conservation of nature and natural resources, and collective action of local communities as our two guiding forces, we work at scales determined by ecological boundaries and with communities across adjacent habitations.

Together with village communities, we interact and collaborate with government functionaries, members of other civil society organisations, academia and political parties, so as to help build a debate on the stewardship of the region and to determine the future course of action.

We collaborate with other organisations on areas of mutual interest and concern. Identified as a Resource Support Organisation, we assist other like-minded organisations to build capacity and scale up the implementation of programmes.

We undertake studies and collaborate with other organisations to further our understanding on wide-ranging issues such as systems dynamics, coupled human and natural systems, groundwater aquifer modelling, fire ecology, energy conservation, socio-ecological systems, institutional adaptations to cope with vulnerabilities, and criticality of Commons.

We work with District and State level administrations in conceptualising and implementing programmes for the restoration of degraded ecosystems. We present the views of local communities so as to influence public policy on issues concerning Commons, ecological security and local self-governance. We disseminate information through print, film and social media so as to generate discussion and build public opinion.

# Building Capacities Partners in Learning

OUR engagement with rural communities on conservation of nature and natural resources is founded on a strong respect for local wisdom and the rationale in which it is grounded. Their norms of collective behaviour and their understanding of what grows above and what lies beneath form the basis of our engagement with them not only to improve their natural surroundings but also to challenge them on who is gaining and who is losing.

We see ourselves as partners who both learn from and impart training to the community. Information gathered through ecological assessments such as geo-hydrology studies, soil analysis and biodiversity inventories, and shared with village communities, builds on community knowledge and provides the basis for communities to determine the future course of action.

**Communities must not be mere passive recipients of the programmes designed to benefit them. By assisting communities in mapping the complexities of natural resource management and in articulating their common concerns, we aim at community-driven processes that effectively shape and use government policies and programmes for conserving their natural resources.**

Over the two decades and more that we have been working alongside local community institutions on ecological restoration, we have developed a strong internal capability to conduct training programmes on concepts and approaches as well as the technicalities of assisting collective action and ecological restoration.

We are increasingly being called upon to offer training programmes and services to other organisations as well: on subjects such as assessing ecological, social and economic changes, institution-building around Commons, biodiversity inventorying, hydro-geological studies, Remote Sensing and Geographical Information Systems (GIS). Offering such programmes helps us exchange experiences and gain from fresh perspectives.



## Nature Workshops

FES plans to set up Nature Workshops (or *Prakriti Kalashalas*) to train representatives of village institutions, Panchayats and Government and Non-Government officials who can steer processes at the village-level and help in the development of their region in areas of local governance and stewardship of natural resources.

The curriculum is rooted within the dynamic of the social, economic and ecological context of the area and the community. It has been developed from several issues that have emerged in the field such as the need for long-term holistic planning models, the need to combine scientific and local knowledge, and the importance of making local governance a more inclusive and engaging process.

Training programmes will be structured

around subjects like ecological restoration measures, managing natural resources, decentralised governance, tenure and access to benefits, and decentralised planning for natural resources.

The Workshops aim to enable the creation of ‘communities of practice’ – communities in which members have a shared interest, in this case, the management of natural resources. Members of these ‘communities of practice’ will be active practitioners of natural resource management and collaborate with each other to create plans centred around sustainable land use practices while also securing and strengthening rural livelihoods.

The Nature Workshops are slated to open in Central Rajasthan and Southern Andhra Pradesh in the coming year, and in Odisha and North Eastern States subsequently.

## Studies & Documentation

### Learning to Ask the Right Questions

CONVENTIONAL programmes on natural resource management usually lack in systematic monitoring of changes, or are mostly limited to tracking economic changes. Over the years, we have developed a comprehensive framework to monitor and study ecological, social and economic changes over a period of time. Changes in biodiversity, hydrology and soil health are recorded alongside changes in socio-institutional dimensions and socio-economic realities.

We undertake these studies either internally and/or in collaboration with other persons or institutions to upgrade the effectiveness of our work at the village and landscape-level. The learning, experiences and outcomes are documented in source books, reports and posters, both for internal use and for wider dissemination among all stakeholders. Broadly, the studies cover the following thematic areas:

- > Analysing human and nature interactions in diverse social-economic-ecological settings using the socio-ecological systems framework;
- > Understanding and analysing institutional

arrangements for local governance of natural resources;

- > Building economic evidence of material resources in general and its significance for different production systems, in particular;
- > Monitoring ecological health including biomass, water and energy audits to assist communities in their conservation efforts, and capturing longitudinal changes with biophysical and institutional interventions;
- > Areas of critical ecological importance (sanctuaries, wildlife habitats) to understand ecological processes and aid evolution of conservation plans;
- > Spatial and non-spatial analysis of socio-economic-ecological databases to capture longitudinal changes in key variables over time with the aim to prepare atlases on development trends;
- > Assessing impacts of climate change on various natural and production systems as well as understanding institutional processes of adapting to vulnerabilities induced by vagaries of nature.



## Mapping the Environment

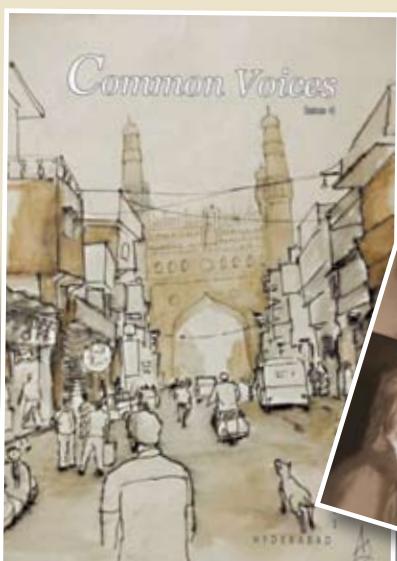
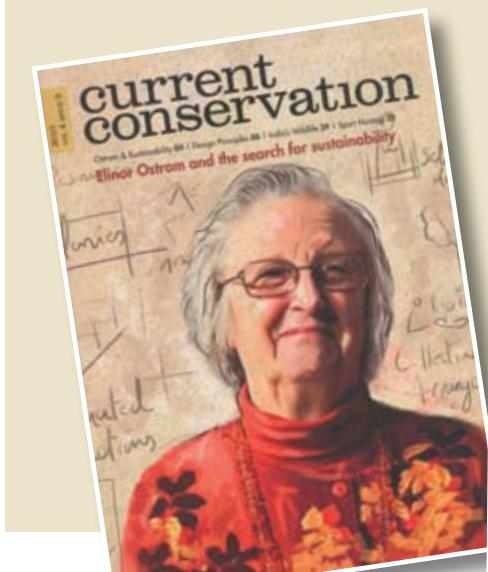
Some of the important studies undertaken during the year were:

- > **A Commons Story: In the Rain Shadow of the Green Revolution**, a study of 3,000 households in seven States and eight agro-ecological zones carried out with seven other NGO partners, to assess the economic significance of the Commons for agriculture and livestock in rainfed areas, as well as to map out the institutional environment which influences their governance.
- > **Ecological health monitoring studies** were conducted in Bhilwara, Angul and Madanapalle to help develop conservation action plans. Having collected the baseline information, we now regularly monitor various parameters.
- > **Studies on population, habitat and nesting habits of some threatened bird species in Rajasthan** like the White-naped Tit, Grey Jungle Fowl and the Great Indian Bustard carried on. A project on Sloth Bear was initiated in Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary so as to collate information on the species' habitat and environmental preferences.
- > The 'Community Managed Hydrological Monitoring and Water Management Programme' has been introduced in about 2,000 villages in 340 watersheds of 16 districts of Andhra Pradesh. The overall objective is to engage with the community in participatory hydrological monitoring for the judicious use of water resources in farming.
- > **Pollination studies conducted in the Kadiri Watershed** in Anantpur district examined pollinator assemblage (bee populations) in sunflowers and tomatoes. There seemed to be a potential decline in pollinator movement as distance from native vegetation increased. In the absence of literature in the sub-continent on pollinators in an agro-forestry landscape, this study can be a model for more detailed investigation.
- > **Legal reviews of Acts related to the Common Pool Resources** were conducted in collaboration with the Enviro Legal Defence Firm (ELDF) for six States in the country to identify gaps, enabling and hindering provisions and explore possibilities for modification.

## Collaborations

We continue to collaborate with various scientific and academic bodies to locate our work in the larger context, design pursuits that are grounded as well as technically rigorous, and provide sound basis for our advocacy efforts:

- > As a part of the Commons Initiative and preparations for 13th Biennial IASC Conference, we collaborated with several practitioner organisations and academic bodies in order to anchor discussions on various dimensions related to the Commons. These include the Centre for Action, Research and Education in Water (CAREWATER) in Anand, Centre for Social Ecology (CenSE) in Jaipur, Fisheries Management Resource Centre (FishMARC) and, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Bombay, Institute of Rural Management (IRMA) in Anand, National Law School of India University (NLSIU), and Openspace, both in Bengaluru.
- > We partner with the Dakshin Foundation to publish our newsletter, Common Voices, and the conservation magazine, Current Conservation, to highlight cutting-edge research and on-the-ground initiatives and experiences relating to the Commons and conservation. And we collaborate with Kalpvriksh in bringing out Protected Area Update and Forest Case.
- > We collaborate with several like-minded organisations in a forum called 'Future of Conservation'.
- > In collaboration with Collective Action and Property Rights (CAPRI), we seek to advance common interests on collective action and property rights of the communities, through developing effective advocacy, communication, and training materials.
- > We anchor the Rainfed Livestock Network (RLN), a consortium of NGOs which works to highlight issues related to livestock rearers in rainfed areas.
- > We collaborate with different international universities: Washington University, St. Louis, to study subjects related to systems dynamics, energy conservation, coupled human and natural systems, and with Clemson University, USA, on hydrological studies. We have initiated collaborations with University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and Indiana University, Bloomington, on forest resource institutions and climate change.
- > Under the Winter Institute initiative, we collaborate with Washington University, St. Louis and Climate Healers and the University of Iowa on initiatives pertaining to the use of renewable energy in rural areas, conservation in protected areas, and rural and urban linkages on water.
- > In collaboration with Growtrees.com, we continue our efforts to undertake regeneration measures on various categories of lands being governed and managed by village institutions.
- > We continue to collaborate with Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives (CInl) in employing a Geographic Information System (GIS) to develop a knowledge base on the districts of Central India.
- > We have become a member of the International Land Coalition (ILC) as a part of our endeavour to promote secure and equitable rights over land for the poor through advocacy, dialogue, knowledge-sharing and capacity building. We continue to be a member of the UN Economic and Social Council (UNECOSOC).



# Spatial Technology for Planning

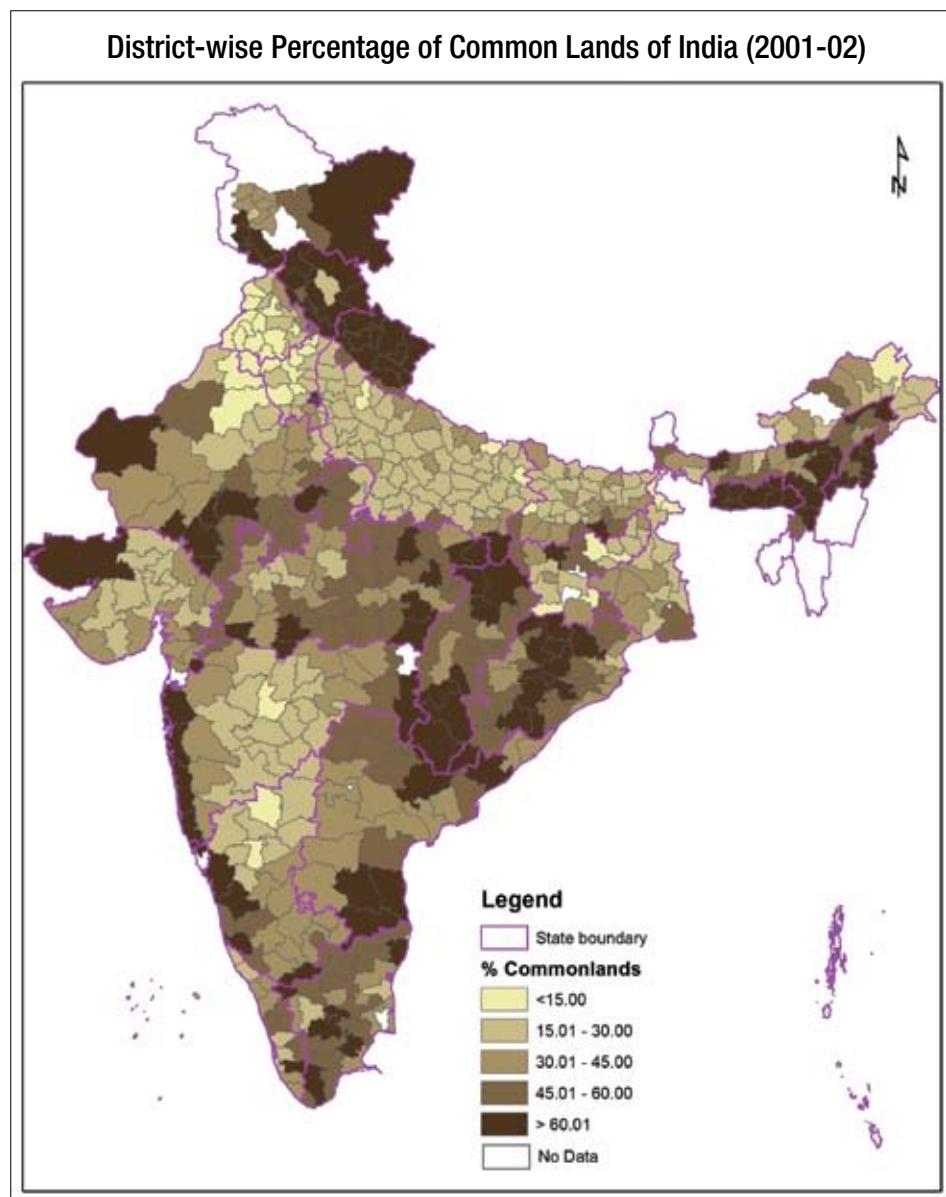
## Gaining from a Bird's Eye View

PERIODIC monitoring of spatial and temporal changes helps form a strategic perspective for conservation. Spatial analysis techniques help our ability to detect, monitor, map and model changes for supporting decisions on natural resource management. Over time, such studies have helped establish the impact of conservation action (or the lack of it) on factors such as water availability, soil quality, biomass and biodiversity.

Spatial representation not only helps us zoom in on inter-linkages between various components of village life but also helps local communities map issues beyond their

immediate horizons. By bringing to light aspects and inter-linkages that are otherwise not readily discernible, such information enables them to clarify concerns and even to engage with adjacent communities on contentious issues.

We have a well-equipped Geographical Information System (GIS) and a Remote Sensing Facility, which have developed comprehensive databases on various parameters (such as demography, natural resources, social, economic, infrastructure and biodiversity) for most parts of the country over the last six or seven decades.



## Community Conserved Areas

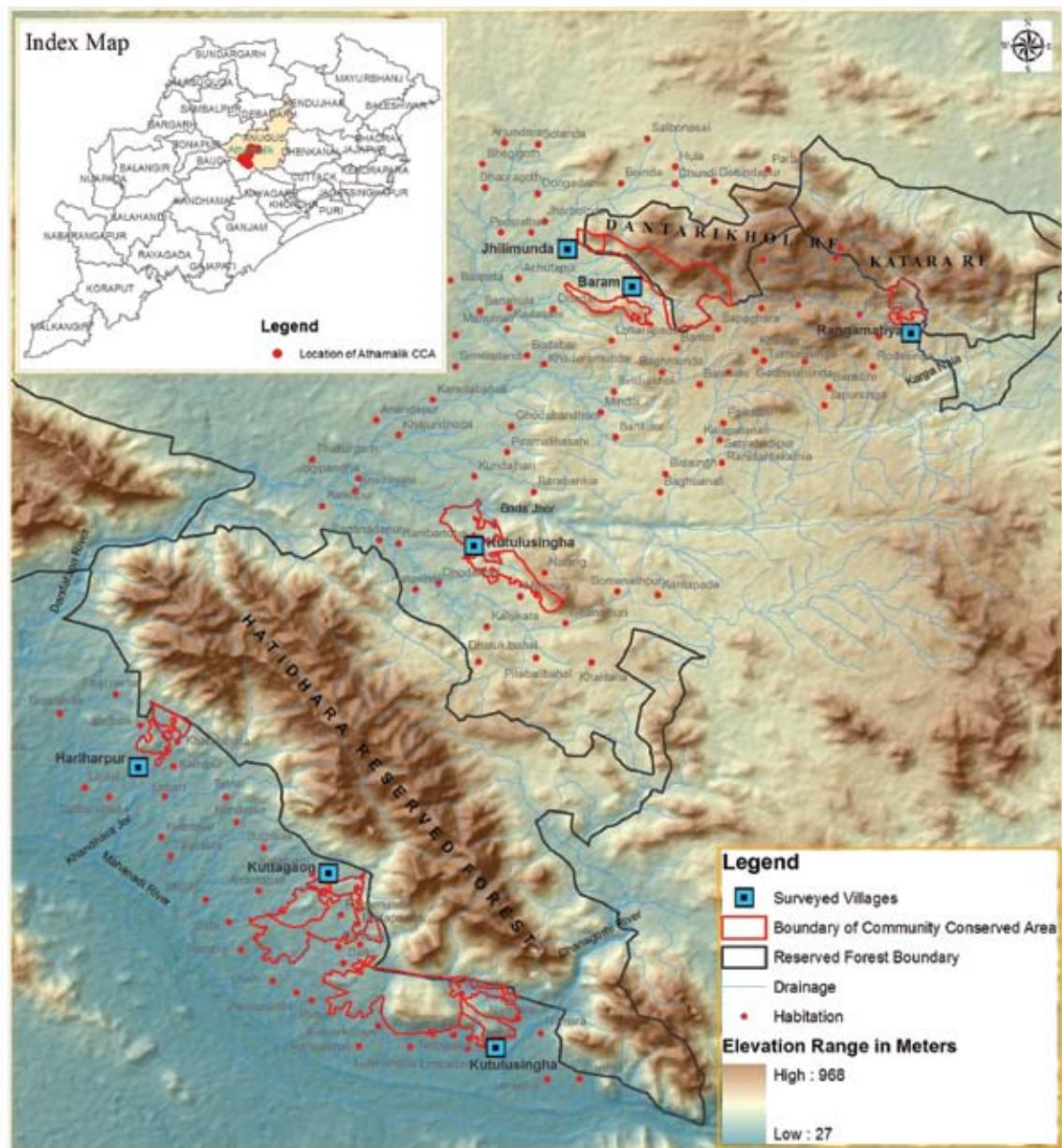
In our effort to pilot the application of mapping technology to aid conservation of nature and promote the recognition of the collective initiatives of these communities in conserving the biodiversity rich areas, we have initiated mapping of 25 representative Community Conserved Areas (CCAs) each of Odisha and Madhya Pradesh.

Undertaken as a joint initiative with UNDP and the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), local

communities and agencies are being involved in the collation of the traditional conservation knowledge, and the latitude-longitude coordinates are being recorded through GPS. This data will also form the basis of a directory documenting the CCAs and the methodology and processes employed.

The effort has the potential not only for scaling up but also extension to other areas, such as mapping community claims under the Forests Rights Act.

### Sample Survey of Villages with Community Conserved Areas, Athamalik Range, Angul - Odisha



# AVIS-IBIS

## Flying Start to Biodiversity Portal

FES successfully launched AVIS – the Avian Information System – a web-based, modular and searchable biodiversity database that brings together detailed information on 1,329 bird species from the Indian region. Today, it ranks 75<sup>th</sup> in the Top 1000 Birding Websites (<http://www.birdingtop500.com/>).

AVIS is only the first step towards creating a vastly expanded and free resource base named the Indian Biodiversity Information Portal (IBIS) on the invaluable biodiversity of the Indian subcontinent. It is a very useful tool for conservationists, researchers, educationists and policy makers in identifying situations demanding specific action. Modelled on the concept of ‘citizen science’, IBIS also enhances the biodiversity and conservation understanding of amateur enthusiasts who can both generate information and shape it.

Modules on AVIS-IBIS include profiles of general avian species; excerpts (18,126)

from existing books and literature, including all major ornithological publications; copyright-free books on birds and natural history; taxonomy modules with checklists; a bibliography on Indian birds with almost 100,000+ citations in global coverage; and links to other dedicated databases.

AVIS collates information from the past while feeding in inputs from ongoing research. Since biodiversity literature has frequently changed taxonomy and nomenclature systems, AVIS matches nomenclature in old literature to its latest counterpart, speeding up referencing and reducing confusion.

An exclusive database of sounds/calls of all the birds in the system is already a big success with users. This collection has been put together in collaboration with Xento-Canto. Unlike some other portals, AVIS-IBIS has a very simple user interface. It is an ‘open

The screenshot shows the homepage of the AVIS-IBIS website. At the top, there's a banner featuring several bird species. Below the banner, the title "AVIS - IBIS" and "FES" is displayed, along with the "FOUNDATION FOR ECOLOGICAL SECURITY" logo. A navigation menu includes links for Home, Species Database, Species Bibliography, Gallery, Resources, Search, and About us. On the left side, there's a login form with fields for Username and Password, and checkboxes for Remember Me, Forget your password?, and Forget your username?. Below the login form, there's a section titled "About AVIS (Avian Information System of India)" which provides an overview of the portal's purpose and development. Another section titled "About IBIS (India Biodiversity Information System)" discusses the broader context of the project. At the bottom, there's a footer with the FES logo, a link to "RANDOM PICTURES", and a "BIRDING TOP 500" badge indicating the website's ranking.

## Threatened Species

beta version' enabling users to send feedback, add features and even contribute data that would be periodically reviewed by experts. The modules/tools for enhancing public participation include 'Forums' to discuss various topics; a 'Picture Gallery' where you can access multimedia data on various species; and 'Images', 'Notes' and 'Sightings' from experts and amateurs alike.

(Website: <http://avis.indianbiodiversity.org/>)

### The Road beyond AVIS

India encompasses a wide range of ecozones ranging from deserts to mountains to forests, and is one of the 17 mega-diverse countries of the world - which together house 70 percent of the planet's biodiversity. The biodiversity treasure-houses or 'hotspots' of the world (three of the overall 34 being located in India) are severely threatened presently, and vigorous conservation efforts are underway the world over.

Conservation science involves dealing with masses of information on status and degradation of natural resources, and prioritising environmental analysis and conservation strategies. A key deterrent in the field of conservation science has been the lack of adequate and authentic information which is readily accessible in user-friendly formats at a single location.

IBIS promises to step into the breach. It will provide free and open access to scientific biodiversity information. Catering to a wide range of stakeholder groups, ranging from amateur wildlife enthusiasts to serious researchers, conservationists and educationists, it will be a crucial tool in achieving conservation goals.

IBIS will go on to build similar portals on mammals, reptiles, amphibians and flora involving individuals, organisations, researchers and scholars right across India. It hopes to serve as a model for developing other similar systems, which evolve through public participation, use and contribution.



**Great Indian Bustard**  
*(Ardeotis nigriceps)*  
Status: Critically Endangered



**White-naped Tit**  
*(Parus nuchalis)*  
Status: Vulnerable



**Black-necked Stork**  
*(Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus)*  
Status: Near Threatened



**Bristled Grassbird**  
*(Chaetornis striata)*  
Status: Vulnerable



**Nilgiri Laughingthrush**  
*(Trochalopteron cachinnans)*  
Status: Endangered



**White-rumped Vulture**  
*(Gyps bengalensis)*  
Status: Critically Endangered

Photos: Arpit Deomurari

# The Commons Initiative

## Interaction on Policy



A meeting of the erstwhile Union Minister of State for Environment and Forests with the senior officials of the State forest departments in Hyderabad on the eve of the 13<sup>th</sup> IASC Conference to deliberate on the need for a new direction for Joint Forest Management (JFM) through legal back-up and institutional reforms.

OUR efforts to influence conservation policies are guided by the pressing need to highlight the criticality of ecological security as the foundation for socio-economic progress. By working directly with rural communities on issues concerning land use and local self-governance across multiple locations, we are able to synthesise lessons from the ground, make comparative studies across locations and, from these, put together relevant policy recommendations. Our work includes stressing the role of Commons – forests and water in particular – as crucial components of the rural economy; stressing the need for greater involvement of self-governing institutions nested within the constitutionally mandated Panchayats; and locating common ground between various initiatives to serve conservation and livelihood objectives.

To this end, we launched the ‘Commons Initiative’ in 2009, aimed at influencing policy and programmatic action on Commons in India. The initiative aims at building strategic collaborations, bringing together practitioners and their networks, decision-makers and scholars and initiating a process for a long-term

campaign on the issue of Commons.

As a part of this initiative, we hosted the 13<sup>th</sup> International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC) Conference in January 2011 in Hyderabad.

The Commons Initiative received a fillip when the Supreme Court of India, in a significant judgment in January 2011, directed State Governments to draw up schemes to evict encroachments on common lands – a critical resource for the village economy – and restore them to Panchayats and Gram Sabhas. The Judge also welcomed any interventions in this regard. We will shortly file an Intervening Application (IA), offering assistance to the Court and Governments in matters concerning the Commons.

Our efforts to influence policy on the Commons include taking the Commons agenda forward in the XII<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (2012-2017). Several individuals associated with the Commons Initiative are members of Working Groups for the Plan. FES is on the ‘Working Group on Management of Natural Resources and Rainfed Farming’ and was entrusted with the task of preparing a base

document on ‘Commons and Institutions’. We also participated in the consultations organised by the National Advisory Council (NAC) on Natural Resource Management and MGNREGS and emphasised the need to focus on common lands.

We stressed that of the national annual expenditure (about Rs. 400 thousand million on MGNREGS) Rs. 300 thousand million or three-fourths is spent on restoring degrading natural resources on common and public land, and rightly so. We believe that such a huge financial investment must be backed up by appropriate institutional investments as well. According to us, the policy imperatives are:

- > Devolution of management and governance of common lands to Gram Sabhas/Panchayats and the habitation level institutions where appropriate;
- > Putting in place appropriate tenure arrangements with such institutions so that the constituent village communities can make secure investments of their efforts and energies and benefit from accessing the produce from Commons; and
- > Devising a long-term programme architecture to restore the degraded lands in a purposive manner.

In our work on the Commons, we collaborate with State Governments and Non-Governmental Organisations. For instance, in Andhra Pradesh, we partnered with the Anantha Paryavarana Parirakshan Samithi (APPS), a network of NGOs, to review the pilot programme for Common Land Development (CPR-NREGA), commissioned by the State Government. The programme was implemented on 50,000 hectares of degraded common land in the Rayalseema region and we are in the process of making suggestions for up-scaling the effort.

We have also been working closely with the Government of Rajasthan on the issue of common land regeneration by leveraging MGNREGS and other schemes. Our efforts got a boost when the Government of Rajasthan formed a State Level Committee for evolving policies for identification, development, and management of common lands and invited



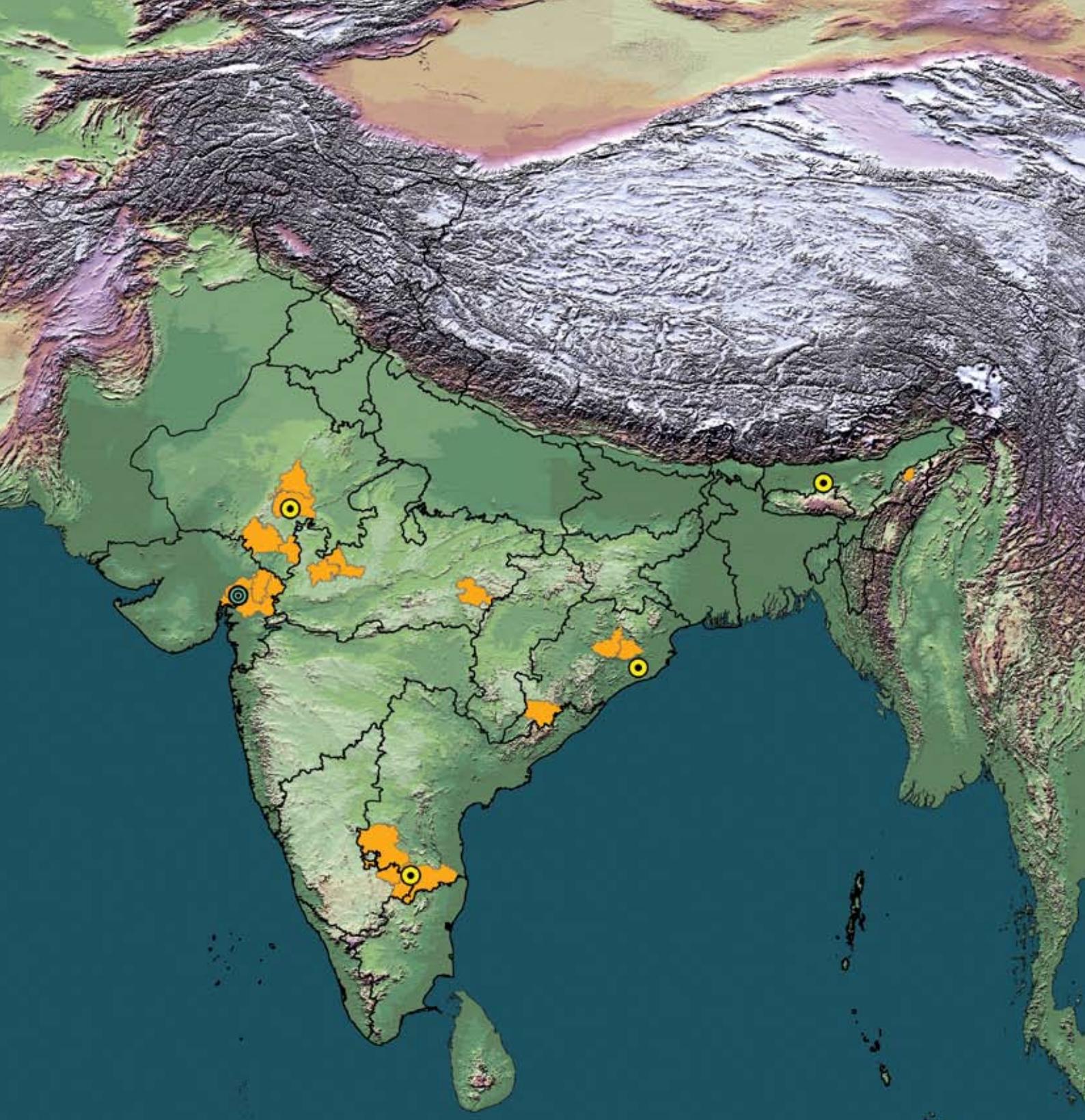
**Facilitating interaction between senior government officials and the local community helps in shaping government policies and programmes to suit local requirements. Given the role of the macro environment in determining resource use, there is a need for policy-level engagement on land use and local governance issues to have sustained impact.**

FES to be a part of the Committee. We played a significant role in helping the Government of Rajasthan draft the Common Land Policy for Rajasthan.

In another related development, and probably in line with the Supreme Court ruling on Commons, the Rajasthan Government issued some enabling orders for safeguarding the Commons in the State. With a view to aid the effective implementation of these orders, we assisted the Government in designing *‘Operational Guidelines on the implementation of grazing land development under MGNREGA’* which have been operationalised.

**Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singh** at the 11<sup>th</sup> Delhi Sustainable Summit in New Delhi noted how “new research in academia is challenging the common view that the Common Pool Resources are best managed by the central authorities”.

He pointed out that the work of Nobel Laureate Dr. Elinor Ostrom – which makes a case for local action by small user groups for managing common resources – held profound implications for policy-makers.



## Our Project Areas

■ FES PROJECT DISTRICT

○ REGIONAL OFFICE

◎ COORDINATION OFFICE

# Our Presence

We are presently working with the **1,049,397 people** and **2,208 village institutions** in **27 districts** across **six States**. These institutions manage and govern a total of **129,126 hectares** of revenue wastelands, degraded forestlands and Panchayat grazing lands as Commons. Within the next four years, we foresee that we will reach out to about **30,000,000 people** and about **60,000 habitations** across the country, and bring an additional **1,500,000 hectares** of Common Pool Resources under local governance mechanisms.

In our pursuit of restoring degraded landscapes and managing natural resources, we have gained experience in locating common lands in larger farming systems, in energising local stewardship, and in crafting institutional designs for conserving common lands and forestlands. Building on the natural and social characteristics and advantages of an area, we work with several contiguous villages that lie in the upper catchments of rivers.

While different strategies guide us in bio-geographically and socio-economically distinct locations, the broad organisational strategies are:

- Reviving the criticality of forests and other common lands and locating inter-linkages with associated production systems – thereby highlighting the value of forests and the necessity for conservation action.
- Undertaking pilot-level land use planning in diverse ecological and socio-economic settings and addressing biomass and water scarcities for meeting the consumptive and non-consumptive needs of village communities.
- Establishing institutional design principles and mechanisms that provide spaces for the poor and for enabling village communities to access, share, and conserve common lands.
- Developing linkages between village-level institutions and the umbrella institution of Panchayats, and integration of natural resource management plans by Panchayats.
- Strengthening platforms for discussion at village and inter-village level by inviting government functionaries, academia and the larger civil society to jointly deliberate on issues of conservation and use of natural surroundings.
- Assessing impact of climate change on various natural and production systems, and introducing mitigation and adaptation measures in ongoing practices.



The annual rainfall ranges from 650mm to 850mm and no. of rainy days from 31 to 34. Length of Growing Period (LGP) ranges from 90 days in the north to 150 days in the south. Situated between 23-31°N to 26-58°N and 72-59°E to 75-26°E.

## RAJASTHAN

IN Rajasthan, we work in the central region adjoining the Aravallis which are inhabited by agro-pastoral communities, and in the southern parts of the forested Vindhya and Aravallis which are inhabited by tribal communities.

In a State where the strength of the rural economy is its rich livestock population, the Commons are crucial for meeting fodder, fuel and water requirements. Unfortunately, the revenue lands are treated as open access

### SALIENT FEATURES

**River Basin:** Mej, Menali, Khari, Lilri; Jhakham, Erav of Mahi, Siwana, Gir of Chambal; Mansi, Wakal, Sei

**Forest Types:** Tropical Dry Deciduous and Dry Thorn Forests; Tropical Dry Deciduous and Grasslands; Tropical Dry Deciduous

**Threatened Species:** Great Indian Bustard, Long-billed Vulture; Rusty-spotted Cat, Four-horned Antelope, Lesser Florican, Fat-tailed Gecko; *Comophora wightii*, *Sterculia urens*, Aravalli Red Spurfowl, White-naped Tit

**Principal Crops:** Jowar, groundnut, pulses, wheat, gram; Maize, sorghum, paddy, cotton, sugarcane; Wheat, maize, barley, sugarcane

**% of Common Lands other than Forestlands:** 52.2; 15.02; 64.52

**% of Forest Cover:** 3.42; 29.33; 23.21

**% of Population Living Below Poverty Line:** 32; 39; 55

**% of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes:** 23; 67; 54

**Total Common Land under Local Governance (ha):** 26,617; 2,335; 4,376

**Total Lives Touched:** 247,668; 31,304; 78,836

**Village Institutions Associated with:** 401; 112; 267

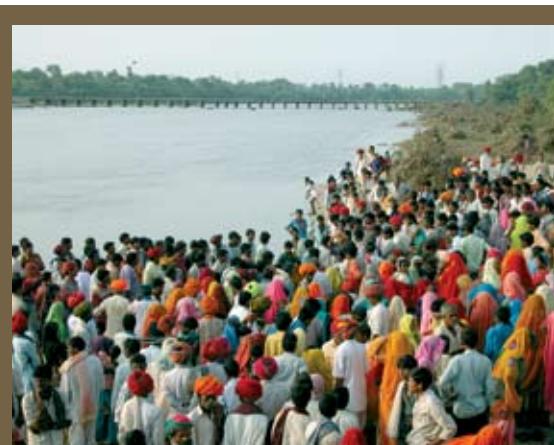
**Funding Agencies:** Omidyar Network, Jamsetji Tata Trust, NABARD-IGWDP, NABARD-WDF, Govt. of Rajasthan, ITC-Rural Development Trust, ITC-MGNREGS, District Rural Development Agency - Bhilwara, UNDP-Small Grant Programme, Grow-Trees, BNP Paribas, Rufford Foundation and Ensemble Fondation, Ford Foundation

resources leading to over-exploitation and illegal encroachment, while the grazing lands under the custody of the Panchayat suffer mainly from breakdown of institutional arrangements. As for the forests, their degradation threatens the overall health of natural resources in the area and inevitably, the livelihoods of already impoverished tribal communities who are dependent on forestland for food, fibre and medicine.

In such a scenario, we work towards the ecological restoration of degraded lands, the security of livelihoods by strengthening the mixed farming system, and the strengthening of institutions for local governance to ensure that the development of the regions is ecologically sound and socially just.

In the central districts of Bhilwara and Ajmer, an area characterised by the scarcity of fodder and the vulnerability of livestock keepers, our efforts to strengthen institutional mechanisms and assist natural regeneration on common lands has resulted in increased availability of fodder and of surface and sub-surface water, better livestock health, and a growing tendency towards dairying as an additional source of income.

In Udaipur, where forests and protected areas like the Kumbhalgarh and Phulwari-ki-Nal wildlife sanctuaries span a large part of the project area, we work with Joint Forest Management committees to strengthen the protection and management regimes of these



The importance of forest lands to the rural economy can hardly be over-emphasised in our country where a large proportion of the populace continues to depend on agriculture for their livelihood. In the forests lie the origins of most of our river systems and thus the major source of supply of all our fresh water.

## Update 2010-2011

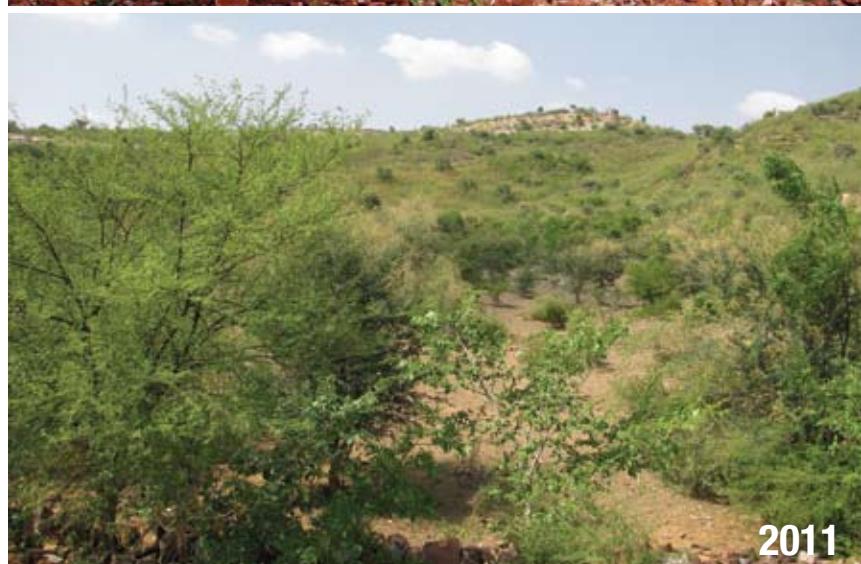
lands by building on customary patterns of access and use.

In Pratapgarh, as in Udaipur, we work with a predominantly tribal population. In an area which has recently shifted to growing soyabean crop for the market, our efforts are to improve the cropping mix, recharge water and soil nutrient levels, and design water-sharing arrangements within and between villages. This way we aim to build resilient farming systems, meet subsistence requirements, and gain from the economic opportunities of the market.

After the Supreme Court's judgement on January 28, 2011, which directed all State Governments to remove encroachments on common lands and restore them to Panchayats and Gram Sabhas, the Rajasthan Government passed several orders, including directives for the demarcation of community-purpose lands. This added impetus to our work on restoring Commons and we offered our assistance to the Government in developing operational guidelines to apply MGNREGS funds for the restoration of Commons.



SS Singh



Vishav Bharti

Meena ki Jhopdia village (registered as a Village Forest Committee) has taken the lead in engaging with neighbouring villages in protecting a larger patch of forestland. Regenerative activities have led to an increase in fodder and water availability and improved the prospects of animal husbandry, adding stimulus to the efforts of the local community to leverage funds from the government programmes such as MGNREGS.

> **235 village institutions** were organised to protect and develop common lands, grazing lands and forestlands, taking the overall total to 708 village institutions in the districts of Bhilwara, Pratapgarh and Udaipur during the year. We reached out to 357,808 individuals of the 708 village institutions.

> **With 3,412 hectares** added during the year, village communities have brought a total area of 33,328 hectares of common land under community management.

> **1,000 kg of seeds** of indigenous species of trees, shrubs and native grass species were sown on forest and grazing lands, and 134,503 indigenous saplings planted on the community-protected common lands.

> **Soil & water conservation** measures were undertaken on 1,854 hectares of common land and farmland, and revegetation measures (under watershed development projects and MGNREGS) on about 590 hectares.

> **400 rural volunteers** were capacitated to assist Panchayats, village watershed committees and village institutions to safeguard common lands including grazing lands and forestland and common water bodies.

> **349 para-workers** were trained to assist in implementation of projects and activities under MGNREGS. The subjects covered were: developing skills for watershed planning, diversion-based irrigation projects, nursery raising and planting techniques, construction of biogas units, aspects of animal husbandry, organic agriculture and improved backyard poultry practices.

> **As initiator and member** of the Committee for evolving policies for identification, management and development of common lands in Rajasthan, we helped prepare the draft policy and programme on common land development for the consideration of the State Government.

> **To build local leadership** and greater ownership of the forests in and adjacent to the Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary and around the Kamalnath forest block in Jhadol, a series of meetings were held with Panchayat representatives and village communities. Similar meetings with local federations of Bhilwara and Pratapgarh focused on conservation and judicious use of natural resources.



## Andhra Pradesh

BROKEN hill ranges with boulders and rocky outcrops, dry deciduous scrub jungles on the ridges and slopes, valleys dotted with cascading tanks – these are the features that form the backdrop of our work in the southern districts of Chitoor and Anantapur in the Rayalseema region. The region falls in the dry rain shadow areas of the southern Deccan Plateau and is prone to drought and distress. Local communities are mainly dependent on rainfed crops to meet their subsistence requirements, while groundnut is the major crop grown for markets.

A considerable part of this landscape is considered Common Pool Resources. Depending on the administrative category

### SALIENT FEATURES

**River Basin:** Papagni

**Forest Types:** Mixed Dry Deciduous, Tropical Thorn Forests and Scrub Forests

**Threatened Species:** Yellow-throated Bulbul, Starred Tortoise, *Chloroxylon swietenia*, *Anogeissus latifolia*

**Principal Crops:** Paddy, chillies, mango, groundnut

**% of Common Lands other than Forestlands:** 30.29

**% of Forest Cover:** 8.24

**% of Population Living Below Poverty Line:** 58

**% of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes:** 20

**Total Common Land under Local Governance (ha):** 14,864

**Total Lives Touched:** 61,730

**Village Institutions Associated with:** 235

**Funding Agencies:** Omidyar Network, Jamsetji Tata Trust, NABARD Distress Districts Programme, Irrigation and Command Area Development Department and District Water Management Agency, Govt. of AP, NABARD RSO Programme

of the land, village institutions such as the Van Samrakshana Samitis and Tree Growers' Mutually Aided Cooperative Societies govern the Commons in the area.

Barring a few areas where village communities have evolved strong institutional arrangements for collective management, much of the land has faced varying neglect in both governance and management by the Government and local communities alike. In such a scenario, repossessing land in favour of village communities, strengthening local institutions and adopting measures for ecological restoration have formed the essence of our work in the region. The consequent increase in the availability of fodder and improved flow of seepage streams owing to favourable recharge conditions, has spurred collective action by the local residents.

In order to monitor changes in the ecological health of the region from such sustained efforts, and contribute to a better understanding of the farming system, we have undertaken studies to quantify the availability of, and demand for, biomass and water. Discussions on improving the forest cover and groundwater are followed by debates on levels of biomass and water extraction so as to promote judicious use of land and water. As a Resource Support Organisation (RSO) for NABARD, we plan to extend such discussion to about 2,000 villages in Andhra Pradesh, in collaboration with other civil society organisations.

Together with the Anantha Paryavarana



**Working on common lands, mistakenly called 'wastelands', provides a unique opportunity to act through a singular platform on the issues of poverty alleviation, social justice and improving ecological health.**

## Update 2010-2011

Parirakshana Samithi (APPS), a network of NGOs, we facilitated the restoration of common lands in about 50,000 hectares in the Rayalaseema region under the MGNREGS (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme). We are in the process of analysing the lessons from these experiences so as to upscale it to adjacent regions. As an RSO of NABARD, we help 14 other NGOs in Chittoor and Anantapur districts in upscaling watershed development activities to bring together communities and their institutions in securing an ecologically sound future.

In order to help build better stewardship of the area, representatives of village communities meet at regular intervals to discuss issues of common concern. We are working on setting up an information and services hub to improve the quality of the debate about their surroundings, and determine local priorities. Representatives are also challenged to arrive at mechanisms to make the MGNREGS process more purposeful, transparent and accountable.



Local communities have been mobilised to protect forestlands in the Sadhukonda range and the adjoining common lands. As agricultural production has become more resource-intensive, village institutions at the habitation-level have evolved collective regulations for the judicious use of biomass and water and have also formed larger federations to discuss and debate issues of conflict and mutual interest.

> **We have reached out** to 61,730 individuals to restore common lands in Chittoor and Anantapur.

> **Village communities** brought an area of 1,033 hectares of common land under their protection and management during the year, taking the total figure up to 14,864 hectares. A total of 31,900 saplings of indigenous species were planted on these lands during the year.

> **Appropriate soil** and moisture conservation procedures and revegetation measures were undertaken across common lands and farmland, under NABARD-supported watershed development projects and MGNREGS.

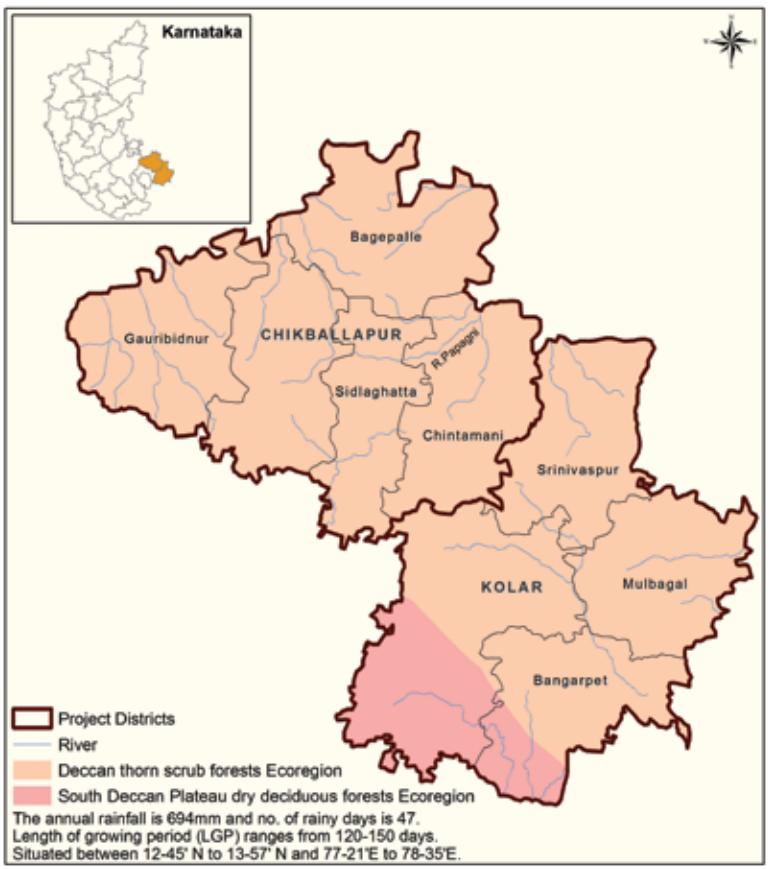
> **74 rural volunteers**, who were exposed to the best Panchayats in the region and provided opportunities to interact with district officials, local media and NGOs, now support village institutions in protection and development of common lands and in articulating conservation agenda in the region.

> **58 para-workers** were trained in various aspects of agriculture, animal husbandry, soil and water conservation measures as also data collection and micro planning, and were successfully engaged by village institutions in implementation of various projects.

> **In an effort towards** developing a multi-actor platform, we supported local federations, rural volunteers, local media personnel, government officials and other local institutions such as *Mandal Mahila Samakhya* to involve themselves in management of natural resources and agriculture. Working together, they were able to set up not only a subsidised seed distribution centre, but also a separate counter for agriculture loans in the local bank.

> **To understand** the role of pollinators and to establish pollinator networks across the forest and agriculture ecosystems, we conducted studies on tomatoes and sunflowers. Our findings indicate that the farther the agricultural crop is from the forest, the lesser the diversity of wild pollinators. We also observed higher abundance of pollinators in crops with more hedge plants.

> **37 visitors** from 10 countries visited villages protecting Commons as part of the multi day field visit during the Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC). Participants gained glimpses of Indian rural life and the collective endeavours of village institutions to safeguard common lands.



## Karnataka

The upper catchments of the Papagni River and two of its feeder streams in the districts of Kolar and Chikkballapur define the geographical context of our activities in the State of Karnataka. While the terrain is largely hilly and rocky, it supports scrub forests, grazing lands, wetlands and agricultural lands, although the indigenous vegetation in the area has been largely replaced by the invasive lantana shrub and eucalyptus plantations.

In a State which has been demonstratedly progressive in strengthening decentralisation and the functioning of Panchayats, we have been working with Panchayati Raj institutions to help restore degraded lands. We believe that the Gram Panchayats are best suited to work with Gomala lands since they have

### SALIENT FEATURES

**River Basin:** Papagni

**Forest Types:** Tropical Dry Deciduous, Tropical Thorn Forests and Scrub Forests

**Threatened Species:** Yellow-throated Bulbul, Starred Tortoise, *Wrightia tinctoria*, *Shorea roxburghii*, Red Sand Boa, Kolar Leaf-nosed Bat

**Principal Crops:** Ragi, paddy, maize, oilseed, pulses

**% of Common Lands other than Forestlands:** 47.92

**% of Forest Cover:** 6.18

**% of Population living Below Poverty Line:** 23

**% of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes:** 29

**Total Common Land under Local Governance (ha):** 10,674

**Total Lives Touched:** 87,175

**Village Institutions Associated with:** 240

**Funding Agencies:** Omidyar Network, Jamsetji Tata Trust, NABARD-WDF, Arghyam, Grow-Trees

been vested with custodial responsibilities to manage the lands. The Panchayats are involved in preparing village perspective plans and leveraging funds from various Government programmes for natural resource management. We capacitate rural volunteers and para-workers to assist the Panchayats in these efforts. We work towards nesting sub-committees on governance of natural resources under the Panchayats so as to situate natural resource management within larger governance plans as well as to help devolve powers to the hamlet level. We advocate the need to form a Standing Committee on Natural Resource Management at the Panchayat level and make natural resource planning mandatory.

While the landscape is dotted with tanks, the area is today registering depleting water levels. Indeed, frequent and severe water shortages now characterise the region. In the absence of adequate forest cover, increased surface-run off has resulted in the silting of tanks, while the unrestrained spread of tube-wells has depleted groundwater. In order to mitigate the crisis, we create and share knowledge on the overall water availability in the region through hydro-geological studies and water audits, and promote water-efficient agricultural practices. We encourage dialogue within the community on current water-use patterns and steps required to improve the availability of surface and sub-surface water.

In view of the critical water shortage the region faces, there is a need to continuously

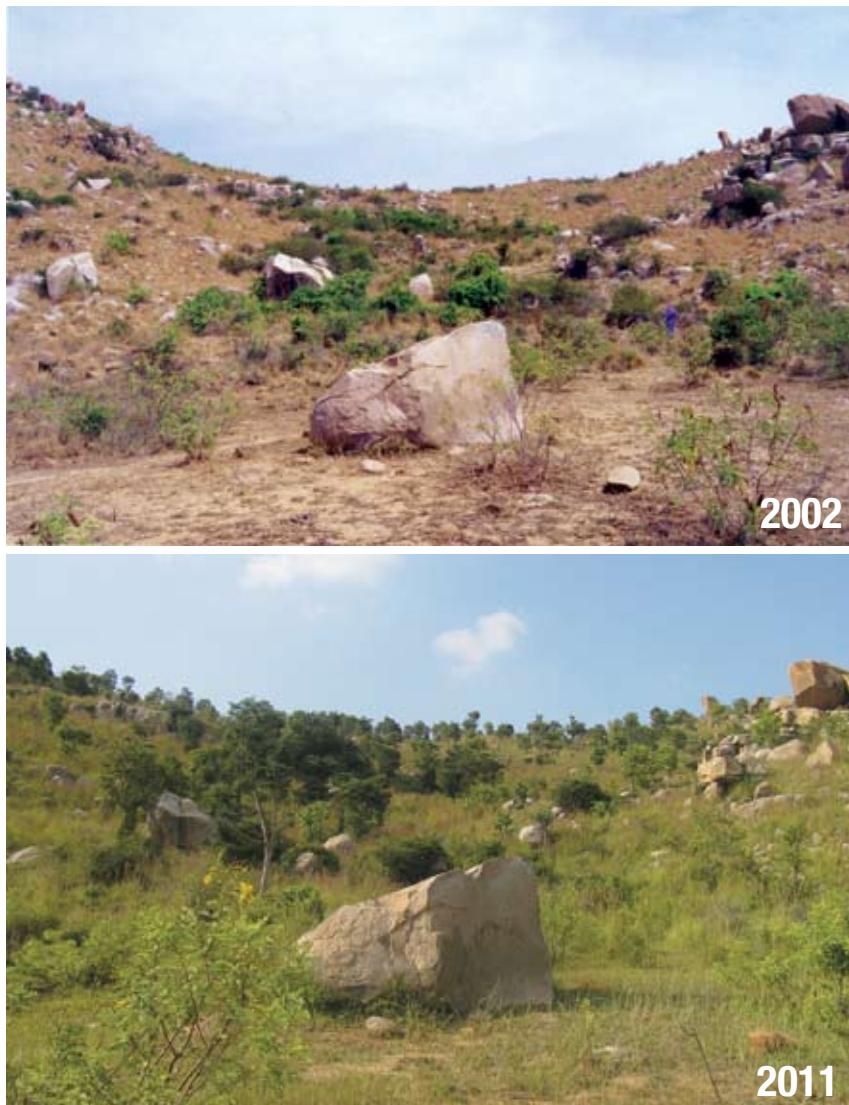


In rural India, 69% of households graze their animals on Commons, 23% of households collect fodder from Commons, and 62% of households access common water bodies for domestic and livestock purposes. Interestingly, 20% of the fodder requirement of even the stall-fed animals is met from the Commons.

## **Update 2010-2011**

compile contextual knowledge on hydrological systems in the area through studies, and encourage institutional mechanisms to regulate the use of water and other natural resources. In order to fully utilise the opportunities presented by MGNREGA in this context, we hope to team up with like-minded organisations and other stakeholders to create a platform, 'NREGA Watch', to help improve planning and implementation of the Act in an advisory capacity.

We are involved in developing an understanding on the design and functioning of Gram Panchayats in responding to, firstly, the ongoing programmes of the Government, secondly, the enabling and hindering factors influencing the Panchayat functionaries to discharge their responsibilities, and lastly, gain from the perception of the residents on the delivery of the programme. Being undertaken in collaboration with Arghyam we hope to share the findings and recommendations with the State and District administration.



Sustained protection of common lands by the village institutions have led to improved water levels and vegetative cover even in the boulder-strewn landscape of Sajjupalle. The area is now home to wildlife like hyenas, deer, jungle cats and bears as well as threatened floral species such as *Billu* (*Chloroxylon swietenia*) and medicinal plants like *Gloriosa superba*.

> **Along with this year's 60**, the total number of village institutions organised for restoring common lands, moved up to 240 in the districts of Kolar and Chikkaballapur.

> **Village communities** have brought under their governance a total area of 10,674 hectares of common land (this year, 1,857 hectares) in Kolar and Chikkaballapur.

> **15,100 saplings** of indigenous species were planted on the common lands being protected by the communities. 2,900 kilos of fodder seeds of three different varieties were procured and distributed to around 800 farmers in the region.

> **Soil & water conservation** and revegetation measures were taken over 850 hectares of common land and farmland, under the NABARD-supported watershed development projects and MGNREGS.

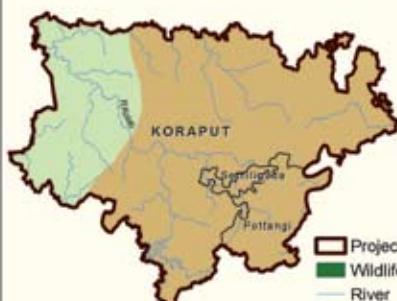
> **101 rural volunteers** were capacitated to assist Panchayats and village institutions in safeguarding common lands. The volunteers were exposed to some of the best Panchayats in Mysore, Kodagu, Dakshin and Uttar Kannada districts to understand the innovative work done by Grama Panchayats in the areas of natural resource management, gender, health and employment guarantee.

> **102 para-workers** were trained on watershed concepts and various aspects of soil and water conservation measures, data collection, book keeping, micro planning, and on aspects of sustainable agriculture and energy conservation.

> **Community seed banks** were initiated in 6 villages of the project area, the main objective being to facilitate sharing of seeds of native crops among farmers. Around 300 farmers joined the initiative.

> **We facilitated meetings** with NGOs who are working on management of natural resources and aiding MGNREGS implementation in both Kolar and Chikkaballapur districts. During the meetings, officials of the Chikkaballapur Zilla Parishad, interacted with the participants and invited NGOs to actively participate in MGNREGS implementation.

> **2 issues of Grama Vani**, the local newsletter, and 1 issue of *Vaastava*, the wallpaper highlighting issues of MGNREGS and National Resource Management, were published.



The annual rainfall ranges from 1273mm to 1540mm and no. of rainy days is 69. Length of growing period (LGP) ranges from 180-210 days. Situated between 18°14' N to 21°40' N and 82°5'E to 86°2'E.

## Odisha

IN Central Odisha, we work in an area which is endowed with dense forests that are rich in biodiversity. The dependence of communities on these resources is evident in their strong customary norms of use, regulation and management.

In contrast, in the southern district of Koraput, we work with tribal communities in areas where the forests have been degraded in the last few decades. In a State which is witnessing rapid industrialisation and exploitation of natural resources, our work focuses on strengthening farming systems

### SALIENT FEATURES

**River Basin:** Mahanadi, Brahmini; **Kolab**

**Forest Types:** Tropical Dry and Moist Deciduous Forests, Bamboo Brakes and Scrub Forests; **Tropical Moist Deciduous Forests**

**Threatened Species:** Tiger, elephant, Gharial, *Barringtonia acutangula* (Hinjal), *Entada phaseoloides* (Gila); Elephant, *Themedax saxicola*, *Strobilanthes jeyporensis*

**Principal Crops:** Paddy, maize, ragi, gram, oilseeds; Paddy, maize, ragi, wheat, pulses, niger, sugarcane, potato

**% of Common Lands other than Forestlands:** 19.11; 42.91

**% of Forest Cover:** 37.06; 19.05

**% of Population Living Below Poverty Line:** 61; 84

**% of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes:** 29; 63

**Total Common Land under Local Governance (ha):** 26,060; 9,537

**Total Lives Touched:** 132,805; 41,821

**Village Institutions Associated with:** 212; 132

**Funding Agencies:** Omidyar Network, Jamsetji Tata Trust, NABARD-WDF, NABARD-Backward Block Development Programme, Grow-Trees, Concern Worldwide

■ Angul ■ Koraput

and securing rural livelihoods by reinforcing the linkages between forests, water and agriculture.

Depending on the category of land, we support the appropriate village institutions like Gramya Jungle Committees, Co-operatives or Joint Forest Management Committees in improving the vegetative cover and in democratic use of the village Commons. At the same time, our work with various institutions of local governance is helping build a larger constituency of representatives of village communities, government personnel, NGOs, and scientists, who are beginning to come together to dialogue and engage on issues that are both competing and collaborative in nature.

In Koraput, we work on the regeneration of degraded forests and extending vegetative cover on the uplands to reduce and reverse the devastating effects of soil erosion and run off of water. We assist communities to protect their forest Commons and help regulate the flow of water and nutrients. In the lower reaches of the hills, we provide critical support for the rural communities practicing subsistence agriculture.

In addition to ecological restoration, we also undertake activities that develop and strengthen livelihood options that are consistent with the functioning of the ecosystem. Our efforts to regulate open grazing in Angul, for instance, has resulted in an increase in area under crop production benefiting the rural communities.



In the current scenario where land redistribution is unimaginable, working on common lands would provide the landless poor both physical and political space as equal members of the community and its future.

## **Update 2010-2011**

We also assist eight partner organisations in planning their engagement with the MGNREGA so as to improve natural resources at a landscape-level – this activity has been received well by communities and built their confidence in sourcing MGNREGS funds. In addition, we have been regularly collecting, analysing, and disseminating information related to the MGNREGA through publication of regular news updates titled ‘Energising NREGA’, and sharing these with larger interest groups.

With the enactment of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, we began encouraging communities to submit claims for recognition of land as protected community forest. We work closely with the Odisha Jungle Manch (OJM), a federation of about 12,000 villages, to secure community entitlements under the Act. So far, we have assisted OJM in filing 870 claims for community forests covering an area of about 2,400,000 hectares of forestland. We have also assisted communities in the Athamallik region to file for community rights over forests under the Act.



Subrat Kumar Singh



Pradeep Mahapatra

Initiated in 1997, better governance on revenue wastelands in Nabkishorepur yielded substantial improvements in the soil moisture regime and water availability, and led to an increase in the area under cultivation, encouraging the community to bring the remaining common land in the village also under protection.

### **> We have reached out to**

174,626 individuals across 344 habitations in 25 Panchayats in the three districts where we are actively engaged in the process of restoring common lands. In addition, we work with 76 habitations across 7 districts through 8 partner organisations for the restoration of the landscape through leveraging MGNREGS.

### **> 9,873 hectares of common land**

was brought under revegetation and community protection, bringing the total area to 41,261 hectares during the year. With rootstock still available in the common lands, assisted regeneration is a key strategy to restoration in this part of the country.

### **> With the aim of making**

governance in the villages more responsive, we trained 108 village volunteers. We also organised a capacity-building programme for 57 para-workers on soil and moisture conservation measures so they can assist in the effective implementation of MGNREGA in their villages.

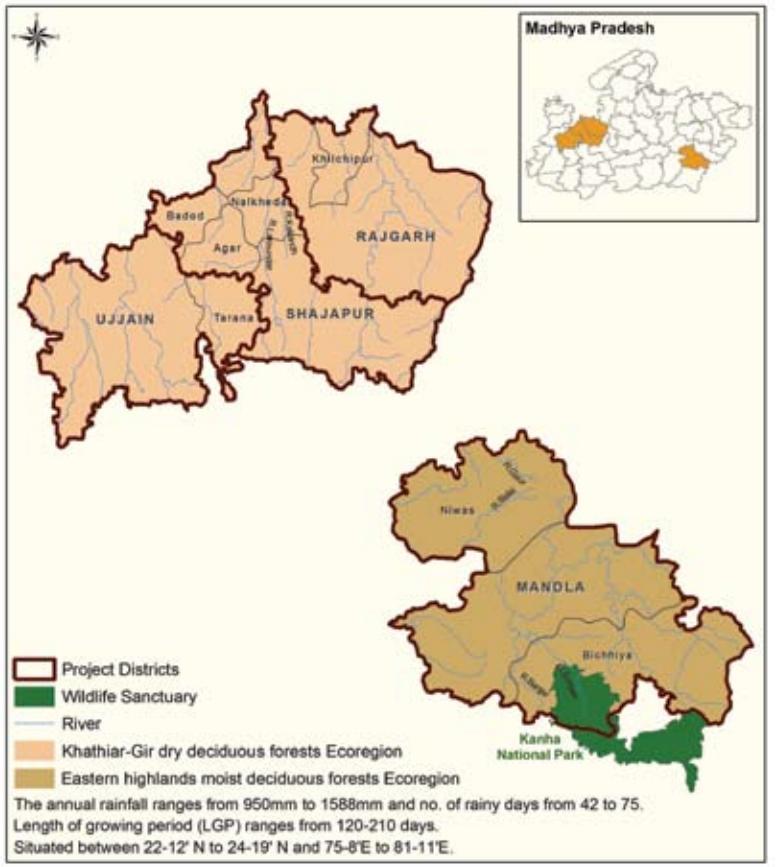
### **> We support** the evolution of local visions for development so as to strengthen community institutions in matters of restoration and governance of their natural surroundings. Working on watershed development programmes, we aim to improve biodiversity and biomass and the productivity of rainfed agriculture.

### **> We continue** to monitor various ecological indicators to re-establish the interlinkage of forests and agriculture.

### **> FES was nominated** as a member of the Steering Committee in the State Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) as also of the State Pollution Board during the year.

### **> We continue** to work for improving the implementation of MGNREGA through a pilot project for leveraging its funds for eco-restoration programmes in 16 Panchayats across 7 districts.

### **> Rs. 83.40 lakhs** was leveraged by the village institutions from the MGNREGS funds for soil and moisture conservation activities during the year. A fortnightly *MGNREGA News Update* – an information bulletin – is circulated regionally as well as nationally on various issues relating to MGNREGA in Odisha and the country at large.



## Madhya Pradesh

OUR work is spread across villages in the Malwa and Mahakaushal regions in the western and eastern parts of Madhya Pradesh.

Malwa's is an undulating topography, of staggered small hillocks and narrow valleys. While forests occupy a mere 1%, common lands occupy 25% of the region. In an area where animal husbandry and agriculture are the predominant livelihoods, these lands take care of the fodder and grazing needs of the many livestock-dependent local communities. The lack of vegetative cover has resulted in the

### SALIENT FEATURES

**River Basin:** Gaur, Balai, Banjar of Narmada; Lakhundar, Garhganga, Kalisindh

**Forest Types:** Tropical Moist Deciduous Forests; Tropical Dry Deciduous and Scrub Forests

**Threatened Species:** Tiger, Swamp Deer, Green Avadavat, vultures (*Gyps bengalensis*, *Gyps tenuirostris*), *Sterculia urens*, *Terminalia arjuna*; *Adina cordifolia*, *Dolichandrone falcatia*, Indian Wolf, Striped Hyena

**Principal Crops:** Paddy, minor millets, maize, wheat, red gram, lentil, niger, mustard; Wheat, jowar, bajra, gram, millet, maize, pulses, til, cotton, soybean

**% of Common Lands other than Forestlands:** 13.4; 33.94

**% of Forest Cover:** 48.86; 0.48

**% of Population Living Below Poverty Line:** 56; 42

**% of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes:** 66; 30

**Total Common Land under Local Governance (ha):** 4,170; 8,335

**Total Lives Touched:** 16,450; 34,029

**Village Institutions Associated with:** 129; 59

**Funding Agencies:** Omidyar Network, Royal Bank of Scotland, Sir Ratan Tata Trust and MGNREGS, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, ICRISAT, Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Sunehara Kal-ITC, Grow-Trees

■ Mandla ■ Agar

widespread use of dung cakes to fuel cooking stoves. As a result, farmyard manure, critical for its organic carbon and nutrients in dryland agriculture, is diverted from agriculture to meet energy requirements, making farming more vulnerable. In these locations we have been working through watershed programmes for improving the vegetation of common lands and the productivity of private lands, besides promoting energy conservation measures.

On the other hand, Mandla in the Mahakaushal region falls in the biodiversity-rich zone of Kanha National Park, nestled in the Satpura ranges. Moist to mixed deciduous forests characterise this landscape and support the lives and livelihoods of 65% of its tribal population. The area, though abundant in natural resources, is considered one of the most backward districts with more than half of the population living below the poverty line. Low productivity of farmlands, increased sale of fuel wood, high dependence on wages and high incidence of migration are some of the critical problems that cripple the area. Our interventions in the area are geared to reconciling dual objectives – of conservation and, simultaneously, the improvement of local livelihoods to reduce the pressure on the natural forests of the region.

In both locations, we have been engaged with Panchayats and the district administration in preparation of perspective plans and enabling better implementation of NREGA for the development of natural resources.



While the Commons are not only the ground where the contestations of the poor may come into play, the incremental gains from a better Commons is sometimes all that the landless get and this is mostly irreplaceable and therefore invaluable.

## Update 2010-2011

Twenty youngsters were chosen for training under the 'Young Leaders For Conservation' programme who will help improve governance of natural resources in the buffer zone and periphery of Kanha National Park.

In Shajapur, we have prepared detailed geo-hydrological profiles of watershed areas, and have conducted studies with the help of Clemson University, USA, to improve our understanding of aquifer boundaries, groundwater storage potential and the impact of recharge on groundwater.

Studies have also been conducted with support from South Asia Pro-Poor Livestock Policy Programme to showcase the critical role of common lands in improving the resilience of dependent livelihoods. The findings of the studies have been disseminated through village and federation meetings, district level workshops and in various other forums to facilitate suitable interventions in the area.



Efforts to restore common lands in the village of Chak through revegetation and soil and moisture conservation measures for over a decade have had encouraging results. In view of the predominantly pastoral economy and the need for fodder, local institutions have taken a collective decision to plant native species on common lands instead of species like *Jatropha*.

> **We have reached out** to 50,479 individuals across 188 habitations in the 3 districts where we are actively engaged in the process of restoration of common lands. During the year we initiated work with an additional 51 habitations.

> **3,810 hectares** of common land were brought under revegetation and community protection during the year, taking the total to 12,505 hectares. With rootstock still available in the common lands, assisted regeneration is a key strategy to common land restoration in this part of the country.

> **Skill-based training** was imparted to 87 para-workers on various aspects of planning and implementation of eco-restoration and farming practices. 45 rural volunteers were identified from the villages to build local leadership on conservation issues.

> **New village management** committees were elected through Gram Sabhas in 18 villages of Mandla, where we have begun operations recently. In Agar, village institutions passed bylaws for use of water from water-harvesting structures: direct pumping has been banned across the villages and first preference given to water for cattle.

> **A study was undertaken** on 'Analysing Value Chain of NTFPs (Non-Timber Forest Products) in Mandla District' under which a detailed business plan was drawn up for Chironji, Mahua, Chakoda (*Cassia tora*), Lac and Gum.

> **In continuation** of the geo-hydrological study being conducted at Agar in collaboration with Clemson University, USA, and IIT-Bombay, infiltration tests, slug tests and 6 bore well drilling were undertaken to understand the characteristics of the aquifer.

> **A project aimed at** conserving and improving the biodiversity and faunal habitats of the Kanha National Park by improving the livelihoods of dependent population was sanctioned by the Royal Bank of Scotland.

> **We continued to support** village institutions and Panchayats for better planning and implementation of MGNREGA; during the year around 135.78 lakhs were leveraged for watershed activities through MGNREGS.



The annual rainfall ranges from 870mm to 900mm and no. of rainy days from 33 to 43.  
 Length of growing period (LGP) ranges from 120-150 days.  
 Situated between 21°49' N to 23°27' N and 72°20'E to 74°28'E.

## Gujarat

SPREAD over five districts in central Gujarat, we work with a diverse range of terrains and on a variety of issues. The ravines on the banks of the river Mahi, the saline mudflats in the Gulf of Khambat, wetlands in Anand, Kheda and Vadodara districts, and the Central Highlands in Dahod and Panchmahal, pose serious challenges for ecological restoration.

These areas are inhabited by people of varied economic, social and cultural backgrounds. While some of the district-level averages might portray a picture of prosperity,

### SALIENT FEATURES

**River Basin:** Mahi, Sabarmati; Valai, Bhe, Kali, Khan

**Forest Types:** Tropical Dry Deciduous; Dry Teak Forests, Mixed Dry Deciduous, Grasslands, and Scrub Forests

**Threatened Species:** Sarus Crane, Black-necked Stork, hyena; Lesser Florican, Sloth Bear, *Dalbergia latifolia*, *Dolichandrone falcata*

**Principal Crops:** Paddy, wheat, tobacco, jowar, maize, cotton; Maize, paddy, sorghum, pulses

**% of Common Lands other than Forestlands:** 26; 20.45

**% of Forest Cover:** 5.15; 14.34

**% of Population Living Below Poverty Line:** 33; 59

**% of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes:** 22; 91

**Total Common Land under Local Governance (ha):** 2,359; 9,062

**Total Lives Touched:** 185,976; 112,586

**Village Institutions Associated with:** 110; 297

**Funding Agencies:** Omidyar Network, Coastal Salinity Prevention Cell, NABARD-IGWDP, NABARD-WDF, Water and Sanitation Management Organisation, Central Soil and Water Conservation Research and Training Institute, BNP Paribas, Aga Khan Rural Support Programme - Hilton Foundation, Govt. of Gujarat, Grow-Trees

■ Anand ■ Dahod

they also mask pockets of acute poverty and marginalisation. In the same vein, while the western districts in the region boast of the highest density of tree cover at the national level, those to the east are severely denuded.

In Anand, Kheda and Vadodra districts, we work along the ravine banks of the Mahi river in restoring vegetative cover and thereby preventing further soil erosion during the rainy season. We support Panchayats, village institutions and other key stakeholders to work together to leverage funds from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and aid restoration of the ravines. We are conceiving plans to restore the entire 100 mile stretch of the ravines along the river and exploring imaginative options such as making the restored area an ecological, cultural and recreational attraction, which will be owned and operated by neighbouring village communities.

In the adjoining taluka, Khambat, where farm productivity is affected by salinity, we have initiated salinity mitigation measures such as the construction of vegetative barriers to minimise the effect of salt-laden winds. Here again, we are working towards the creation of a concerned citizens' group involving multiple stakeholders to leverage MGNREGS and



**Dominant paradigms of development increasingly discount the value of indigenous arrangements that are not merchandisable, and worse still, they tend to promote a trend of individualistic behaviour putting in jeopardy both Common Pool Resources and the village institutions which are probably the most tangible manifestation of local governance.**

## Update 2010-2011

expand the scope of regeneration activities.

In Dahod and Panchmahal, where a large section of population is tribal and living below the poverty line, we assist the communities in developing mechanisms to provide equal access to benefits and curbing exploitation of resources. Our efforts in these districts include registering community claims over forests under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) and encouraging perspective planning at the landscape-level.

Through the Jan Kalyan Mandal Scheme in Panchmahal, we are working closely with the district administration to train a cadre of tribal youth to assume stewardship for the area. They are learning to assist communities to leverage the numerous government programmes aimed at poverty alleviation and provision of agricultural inputs and services.

With the hope of bringing the entire range of forests under better local self-governance, we plan to build a platform for interaction between the villages that border Rajasthan and Gujarat.



Sanjay Bhattacharya



Chetana Nand Jha

It is the lay of the land that determines the social arrangements for governing local forests. In Sarad village, each household manages the land that falls adjacent to their house and also appropriates the forest produce that grows in that area. However, when it comes to protecting that land from trespassers, the entire village comes together to negotiate with the neighbouring villages.

> **We work with 407** habitation-level institutions, of which 194 were added this current year. A total of 11,421 hectares of common land covering 55,442 households (298,562 individuals) is under community management, of which 1,492 hectares of common land were added this current year.

> **Soil and moisture** conservation and revegetation measures were carried out over 426 hectares of common land, on which 290,000 saplings of local species were planted. A 116 hectares of farmland were covered under farm bunding with 14,400 saplings planted upon farm bunds.

> **175 villages** volunteers and 145 para-workers were capacitated to assist the Panchayats, village watershed committees and village institutions in their efforts to safeguard common lands (including grazing lands, forestlands and common water bodies).

> **Under the Jan Kalyan** Mandal (JKM) scheme, the district administration has agreed to train village computer entrepreneurs to manage e-gram centres.

> **Discussions** were also held with JKM Coordinators and para-workers on coming to a common understanding on the finer points of setting up an Agriculture Toolkit cum Agro-Service Center in Santrampur and Kadana.

> **FES was selected** as capacity-building agency for implementation of the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) in Anand and Kheda districts.

> **As a first step** towards tackling the riverside ravines, a river festival, 'Mahi Mahotsav', was organised during the year. Post-festival, a forum, the 'Mahi Kantha Vikas Manch', was constituted to oversee measures to stabilise the Mahi ravines.

> **A meeting** of the District Level Coordination Committee (DLCC) in Anand was held under the chairmanship of the District Collector and attended by the concerned Government departments. The agenda was to draw up joint plans for Commons development in the district, while ensuring convergence of relevant government schemes and leveraging funds from various Government aid schemes.

# The North East

Nestled in the Eastern Himalayas, the North-Eastern parts of India are home to some of the finest remaining rain forests in the country, and shelter endangered species like the Asian Elephant, the Bengal Tiger, the Red Panda, Asian Rhinoceros, the Great Indian Hornbill and the Snow Leopard – along with probably the most varied Indian species of orchids too!

The forests serve as catchment areas for several rivers that criss-cross through the region virtually defining the culture and life of the communities. The population is predominantly tribal, coming under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution which honours the traditional autonomy of tribal communities in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.

The rich biodiversity of the forests and the cultural diversity of the people as also the strong character of local self-governance helped shape our decision to initiate work in the region. Our experience of working with village communities on Commons and forest ecosystems in several parts of India would, on the one hand, be further enriched by our exposure to the traditional practices and norms of this region while, on the other hand, experiences from other parts of India could



offer fresh insights on tackling contemporary challenges in the region.

Over the year, visits and exposures to various organisations and initiatives, and discussions with both organisations and people of the region, have helped us realise that our initial years here would be aimed essentially at developing an understanding of the area and nurturing a group of interested individuals who are committed to better stewardship and conservation of the

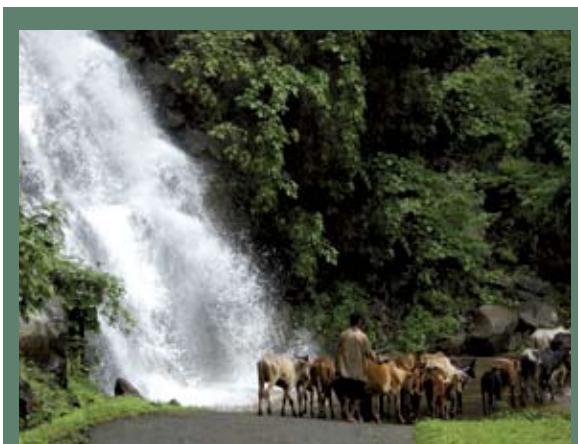
region. We will explore partnerships with different organisations so as to learn from their experiences and collaborate on some initiatives. We will undertake studies to build our understanding of local ecological characteristics, structures of local governance and administration, traditional institutions, land tenure and land use policies in these States.

Jagdeesh Rao



Chetana Nand Jha

Empowerment of People through Economic Development (NEPED) which has had rich experience in working with rural communities on nature and natural resource conservation. We hope to build on their expertise in strengthening the Community Conserved Areas in Nagaland, and join hands in assisting village communities to develop appropriate management plans which bring together their conservation and livelihood priorities.



Since Commons are spread over many villages and their usage patterns are also determined across villages, it is necessary that federations of inter-related communities determine the policies and guidelines and move towards the collective management and governance of natural resources.

We are surveying locations in Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh to assess the feasibility of setting up field-level teams who could directly engage with village communities to identify issues and plan collaborative efforts.

We are also exploring the possibility of collaborating with the Nagaland



# Auditors' Report

We have audited the attached Balance Sheet of Foundation for Ecological Security as at 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2011 and also the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended on that date hereto. These financial statements are the responsibility of the management of the Society. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in India. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material mis-statement. An audit includes examining on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by the management as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

Further, we report that:

- (i) We have obtained all information and explanations, which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purposes of our audit;
- (ii) In our opinion, proper books of account have been maintained by the Society, so far as appears from our examination of those books;
- (iii) The Balance Sheet and the Income & Expenditure Account dealt with by this report are in agreement with the books of account;
- (iv) The Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Account dealt with by this report comply with the accounting standards applicable to the Society;
- (v) In our opinion and to the best of our information and according to the explanations given to us, the said accounts read together with "Notes" appearing in schedule "15", give a true and fair view in conformity with the accounting principles generally accepted in India:
  - (a) in the case of Balance Sheet, of the state of affairs of the Society as at 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2011 and
  - (b) in the case of the Income and Expenditure Account, of the excess of Income over Expenditure of the Society for the year ended on that date.

As required by the Rule no. 13.7 of the Society, we further report that:

- (i) No personal expenses of Officers and members of the Governing Board, except for those payable as per the terms of the appointment/agreement or authorised by the rules and regulations of the Society, have been charged in the books of accounts,
- (ii) The transactions of the Society are not in contravention of the constitution of the Society, its rules and regulations,
- (iii) The Board of Governors has been properly constituted in accordance with the covenants of Society's rules and regulations.

For **C.C. Chokshi & Co.**  
Chartered Accountants  
(Registration No. 101876W)

**H.P. Shah**

Partner

(Membership No. 33331)

Place: Ahmedabad

Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2011

# Balance Sheet

(AS AT MARCH 31, 2011)

	Sch.	2011 Rs.	2010 Rs.
<b>SOURCES OF FUNDS</b>			
CORPUS FUND	1	<b>197,493,468</b>	196,770,244
RESERVES AND SURPLUS	2	<b>32,334,913</b>	31,599,092
Secured Loan from Bank:		<b>170,355,370</b>	-
Temporary Overdraft from a Bank (Ref. Note 3 Sch.15)			
PROGRAMME FUNDS	3	<b>40,721,513</b>	40,610,869
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>440,905,264</b>	<b>268,980,205</b>
<b>APPLICATION OF FUNDS</b>			
FIXED ASSETS	4		
Gross Block		62,176,575	58,328,827
Less: Depreciation		35,874,549	32,758,904
		<b>26,302,026</b>	<b>25,569,923</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS, LOANS AND ADVANCES</b>			
Inventories	5	65,183	80,832
Cash and Bank Balances	6	412,134,520	239,451,233
Other Current Assets	7	248,390	3,007
Loans and Advances	8	11,122,421	8,208,452
		<b>423,570,514</b>	<b>247,743,524</b>
Less: Current Liabilities & Provisions	9	8,967,276	4,333,242
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>414,603,238</b>	<b>243,410,282</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>440,905,264</b>	<b>268,980,205</b>
Significant Accounting Policies	14		
Notes on Accounts	15		

As per our attached report of even date

Amrita Patel  
Chairman

For C.C. Chokshi & Co.  
Chartered Accountants

Place: Ahmedabad  
Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2011

H.P. Shah  
Partner

Place: Anand  
Date: 18th June, 2011

Jagdeesh Rao  
Executive Director

Schedules and Notes on Accounts are posted at [www.fes.org.in](http://www.fes.org.in)

# Income and Expenditure Account

For The Year Ended March 31, 2011

	Sch.	Rs.	2011	2010
		Rs.		Rs.
<b>INCOME</b>				
Fund Received:				
- For Projects		137,641,171		84,567,976
- Others		<u>105,820</u>		<u>32,198</u>
Interest and Other Receipts	10		137,746,991	84,600,174
Receipts on Study, Survey and Training			19,477,987	19,251,421
Income on IASC Conference Account (Ref. Sch.13 Column E)	13		<u>35,418,676</u>	<u>-</u>
	TOTAL		<b>192,643,654</b>	<b>103,861,559</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
A. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY-BASED INSTITUTIONS AND NATURAL RESOURCES				
Planning and Survey		5,004,462		1,578,725
Formation and Strengthening of Community-based Institutions		1,948,483		367,671
Soil and Water Conservation Measures		11,660,304		15,588,211
Revegetation Measures		3,360,621		664,693
Measures to Sustain Livelihoods		9,422,725		3,088,021
Energy Conservation Activities		1,165,349		346,603
Capacity Building Activities at Village Level		11,403,812		8,168,037
Managerial Assistance	11	<u>33,304,251</u>		<u>27,540,780</u>
			<b>77,270,007</b>	<b>57,342,741</b>
B. SUPPORT SERVICES				
I. CAPACITY BUILDING				
Survey and Planning for New Projects		2,878,511		2,591,598
Capacity Building of Staff Members		1,895,969		4,906,914
Promotional Activities and Advocacy		19,325,022		4,280,156
Documentation, Studies and Dissemination		<u>5,262,357</u>		<u>3,862,506</u>
			<b>29,361,859</b>	<b>15,641,174</b>
II. ADMINISTRATION AND RECURRING EXPENSES				
Staff Salaries and Benefits	12	36,150,141		25,497,068
Travel and Conveyance		604,562		1,263,198
Professional Fees and Consultancy Charges		1,155,780		901,238
Motor Vehicle Running and Maintenance		296,700		316,162
Rent, Rates,Taxes and Electricity Charges		1,858,438		1,575,100
Communication Expenses		1,238,146		1,231,316
Printing and Stationery		510,675		413,485
Computer Maintenance		631,266		544,874
General Repairs and Maintenance		437,400		288,459
Insurance Premium		362,795		383,751
Statutory Audit Fees and Expenses		251,089		221,033
Miscellaneous Expenses		<u>1,593,462</u>		<u>1,309,232</u>
			<b>45,090,454</b>	<b>33,944,916</b>
			<b>151,722,320</b>	<b>106,928,831</b>
C. EXPENSES FROM OTHER FUNDS			<b>26,795</b>	<b>35,916</b>
D. EXPENSES ON STUDIES, SURVEY AND TRAINING				
E. EXPENSES ON IASC CONFERENCE (Ref. Sch.13 Column I)	13		<u>-</u>	<u>9,964</u>
Depreciation (Sch. 4 Column G)		4,374,523		4,047,064
Loss / (Profit) on sale of Assets		<u>70,287</u>		<u>(79,994)</u>
			<b>4,444,810</b>	<b>3,967,070</b>
Less: Adjusted against Capital Fund (Ref. Sch.2.A)		<u>4,444,810</u>		<u>3,967,070</u>
	TOTAL		<b>187,453,400</b>	<b>106,974,711</b>
Excess of Income/(Expenditure) over Expenditure / (Income)			<b>5,190,254</b>	<b>(3,113,152)</b>
Amount transferred to / (from) Projects Account (Sch.3.A)			<b>192,643,654</b>	<b>103,861,559</b>
Amount transferred to / (from) Projects Account (Sch.3.B)			<b>4,931,801</b>	<b>3,194,526</b>
Balance of Excess of Income over Expenditure carried to Balance Sheet			<b>79,025</b>	<b>3,718</b>
Significant Accounting Policies		<b>14</b>		
Notes on Accounts		<b>15</b>		

As per our attached report of even date

Amrita Patel  
Chairman

For C.C. Chokshi & Co.  
Chartered Accountants

Place: Ahmedabad  
Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2011

H.P. Shah  
Partner

Place: Anand  
Date: 18th June,2011

Jagdeesh Rao  
Executive Director

**Schedule 3.1 Project-wise Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended March 31, 2011 (in Rs.)**

Sr	Particulars	INCOME			EXPENDITURE			Excess of Income/ (Expenditure)/over Expenditure/(Income) incurred during the Year	(F-I)	Non Recurring Expenses incurred during the Year	Balance as on 31.03.2011	
		Opening Balance on 1.4.2010	Fund Received/ Transferred and Refunded during the Year	Total Income and Interest and Other Income during the Year	Community- based Institutions	Capacity Building	Administration Expenses	Total Expenses incurred during the Year				
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
<b>A. INDIAN CONTRIBUTION</b>												
1	Jamsetji Tata Trust (JTT)	25,923,510	22,157,860	520,906	22,678,766	22,681,578	10,650,900	36,916,652	(14,237,886)	97,764	11,587,860	
2	NABARD	946,159	6,874,173	100	6,874,273	4,880,875	893,722	1,442,463	7,227,060	(352,787)	18,634	574,738
3	Sir Ratan Tata Trust (SRTT)	3,201,744	3,000,000	73,444	3,073,444	3,407,099	29,960	1,032,835	4,469,894	(1,396,450)	-	1,805,294
4	ITC Sunehara Kal	(682,612)	20,689,410	42,829	20,732,239	18,760,173	-	810,495	19,570,668	1,161,571	42,700	436,259
5	MFRLP	1,579	328,398	-	328,398	153,988	-	174,400	328,398	-	-	1,579
6	International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)	1,397,990	(243,000)	-	(243,000)	-	-	-	(243,000)	-	-	1,154,990
7	Government of Gujarat	3,038,093	7,550,240	89,117	7,639,357	3,185,769	40,242	57,709	3,283,720	4,355,637	-	7,393,730
8	Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT)	3,555,000	-	38,990	38,990	1,747,164	-	490,910	2,238,074	(2,199,084)	-	1,355,916
9	UNDP	-	399,800	-	399,800	-	-	-	399,800	-	-	399,800
10	Department of Rural Development	(91,119)	2,239,772	7,695	2,247,467	1,706,638	-	65,841	1,772,479	474,988	-	383,869
11	UNDP Small Grant Programme	163,504	697,931	-	697,931	467,541	90,816	19,640	577,987	119,934	-	283,438
12	NREGS	149,310	1,053,000	-	1,053,000	737,449	-	3,791	741,240	311,760	-	461,070
13	Grow-Trees	-	1,118,345	-	1,118,345	451,389	-	6,384	457,773	660,572	-	660,572
14	BNP Paribas	-	1,502,583	-	1,502,583	1,270,713	725	10,649	1,282,087	220,496	-	220,496
15	International Crop Research Institute for the Semi Arid Tropics	64,055	462,500	-	462,500	179,737	-	964	180,701	281,799	-	345,854
16	Coastal Area Development Program (CADP)	(369,096)	803,481	4,467	807,948	563,952	-	28,862	592,814	215,134	-	(153,962)
17	The Duleep Matthal Nature Conservation Trust (DMNCT)	-	1,350,000	-	1,350,000	-	-	596,899	596,899	753,101	-	753,101
18	Afghan	-	293,472	-	293,472	21,438	-	-	21,438	272,034	-	272,034
19	World Agroforestry Center	120,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120,000
20	National Bamboo Mission (NBM)	-	50,000	-	50,000	50,000	-	-	50,000	-	-	-
21	ITC Rural Development Trust	27,429	25,358	859	26,217	53,646	-	-	53,646	(27,429)	-	-
22	Samaj Pragati Sahayog (SPS)	24,303	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI)	(620,000)	620,000	-	620,000	-	-	-	620,000	-	-	-
<b>Total "a"</b>		<b>36,849,849</b>	<b>70,973,323</b>	<b>778,407</b>	<b>71,751,730</b>	<b>60,231,755</b>	<b>5,333,942</b>	<b>14,795,843</b>	<b>80,361,540</b>	<b>(8,609,810)</b>	<b>174,698</b>	<b>28,065,341</b>
<b>B. FOREIGN CONTRIBUTION</b>												
24	Omidyar Network	-	42,368,746	1,198,592	43,568,338	8,847,715	14,358,266	13,883,636	37,089,617	6,478,721	4,376,038	2,102,683
25	Concern Worldwide	2,179,684	8,110,665	5,621	8,116,286	4,158,424	2,960,365	1,669,810	8,788,589	(672,313)	225,170	1,282,201
26	Ford Foundation	321,978	9,337,043	68,169	9,405,212	12,582	3,076,627	516,759	3,605,978	5,799,234	-	6,121,212
27	Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS)	-	1,737,350	-	1,737,350	967,606	123,870	649,361	1,740,837	(3,487)	80,276	(83,763)
28	Ensemble Foundation	-	1,457,158	-	1,457,158	-	-	196,048	196,159	1,260,999	-	1,260,999
29	Action Aid	-	1,10,000	-	1,100,000	-	-	910,042	199,616	1,10,658	(9,658)	(9,658)
30	Rufford Small Grant	842,354	-	-	-	-	-	360,006	151,663	511,669	44,000	286,685
31	Agakhan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP)	-	1,142,250	-	1,142,250	8,222	-	-	8,222	1,134,028	-	1,134,028
32	SR Trust	-	163,420	-	163,420	-	-	163,420	-	-	-	-
33	Deccan Development Society (DDS)	-	10,000	-	100,000	31,067	3,326	-	34,393	65,607	-	65,607
34	Edieh Hofmeister	15,135	361,914	-	361,914	-	-	222	222	361,692	-	376,827
35	Glemson University	(57,260)	789,302	-	789,302	-	-	735,003	(2,961)	732,042	57,260	-
36	SPWD	395,003	-	11,463	11,463	321,839	-	84,627	406,466	(395,003)	-	-
37	Washington University	49,087	-	-	-	-	-	11,330	12,470	23,800	-	25,287
<b>Total "b"</b>		<b>3,745,981</b>	<b>66,667,848</b>	<b>1,284,845</b>	<b>67,952,693</b>	<b>14,347,465</b>	<b>22,898,303</b>	<b>17,165,314</b>	<b>54,411,082</b>	<b>13,541,611</b>	<b>4,725,484</b>	<b>12,562,108</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL (A+b)</b>		<b>40,595,830</b>	<b>137,641,171</b>	<b>2,063,252</b>	<b>139,704,423</b>	<b>74,579,220</b>	<b>28,232,245</b>	<b>31,961,157</b>	<b>134,772,622</b>	<b>4,931,801</b>	<b>4,900,182</b>	<b>40,627,449</b>
<b>B Corpus Fund</b>												
38	Interest Income Transferred from Corpus Fund (Ref. Sch. 1)			16,076,306	16,076,306	2,690,787	1,129,614	12,255,905	16,076,306	-	-	-
39	Interest Income Transferred from Corpus Fund (Ref. Sch. 1)			873,392	873,392	-	-	873,392	873,392	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL B</b>				<b>16,949,698</b>	<b>16,949,698</b>	<b>2,690,787</b>	<b>1,129,614</b>	<b>13,129,297</b>	<b>16,949,698</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL (A+B)</b>		<b>40,595,830</b>	<b>137,641,171</b>	<b>19,012,950</b>	<b>156,684,121</b>	<b>77,220,007</b>	<b>29,361,899</b>	<b>45,090,454</b>	<b>151,721,320</b>	<b>4,931,801</b>	<b>4,900,182</b>	<b>40,627,449</b>
Previous Year's Total		45,593,116	84,567,976	19,166,329	103,734,305	57,342,741	15,641,174	33,944,916	106,328,831	(3,194,526)	1,802,760	40,595,830

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