

REPORT ON THE VISIT OF DEPARTMENT RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS TO HFRI, SHIMLA ON 15TH OCTOBER, 2015

Department related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science & Technology, Environment & Forests visited Shimla from 14th to 16th October, 2015. The main objective of the Committee to visit Shimla was to hear the views of various stakeholders including Experts, Non-Governmental Organizations/ Civil Society Organizations on 'The Compensations Afforestation Fund Bill, 2015' and Environmental Issues of Himachal Pradesh in general and Shimla in particular. As per programme, the Committee heard the views of the Non-Governmental Organizations/ Civil Society Organizations on 14th October 2015 and also heard the views of Officers of Government of Himachal Pradesh on 15th October 2015 on the above said Bill.

In the afternoon of 15th October 2015, the Committee visited **Himalayan Forest Research Institute, Panthaghati, Shimla**. Dr. V.P. Tewari, Director, HFRI welcomed the Committee members.







After this, Dr. Tewari gave a detailed presentation on the research achievements as well as ongoing and future activities of the Institute. He informed the Committee that this Institute initially started its journey as High Level Conifers Regeneration Centre, Shimla

in the year 1977 only to study the regeneration problems of Silver fir and Spruce in the area, keeping in view pressure on these species for fruit packing cases. Dr. Tewari added that with the passage of time, Government of India appreciated the problems of forestry and environmental related problems of Western Himalayan states of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir and very rightly upgraded this Centre to the level of Institute and assigned the responsibility of taking up forestry research related activities in the two Himalayan states of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir.

He informed the Committee that The institute has developed and extended the Nursery & plantation technologies for Silver fir and Spruce, Nursery technology of indigenous cold desert species, Macro-proliferation techniques for Kutki and Mushkbala multiplication, Integrated pest management of Deodar defoliator (*Ectropis deodarae* Prout.), Intercropping of important temperate medicinal plants with horticultural plantations, Seed Technology of *Juniperus polycarpos* (Himalayan Pencil Cedar), Integrated Pest Management of Deodar defoliator (*Ectropis deodarae* Prout).

The Director further highlighted that to motivate the farmers, field functionaries of SFD's, rural and women folks, SHG towards forestry, the institute is conducting various trainings in Nursery Technology, Medicinal Plants, Eco-restoration, Productivity Enhancement, Pest and Disease Management, Bamboos etc.; organizing National/Regional Workshops, conducted exposure visits for farmers and other stakeholders within and outside the state, from time-to-time. He apprised the Hon'ble Members of Parliament that the Institute is also establishing Western Himalayan Temperate Arboretum to create environmental awareness, dissemination of knowledge and technologies through print and electronic media, Establishment agroforestry demonstration trials in farmer's field, Identification of forest produce confiscated by Police and State Forest Department are the other major areas, where the Institute has also worked. The Institute from time to time is also attending the queries of State Forest Departments of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir on insect-pest & disease problems & suggesting control measures. He further added that the Institute has also been working in the cold desert areas of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir.

Director, HFRI added that though this is comparatively a small Institute of *Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education* yet the area of its operation is too large as compared to the other Institute, however, this Institute is working well within its small resources and the efforts of HFRI, are being appreciated at every forums. Director, HFRI also informed the Committee about the future plans of the Institute but like many other Departments the constraints of funds is also a major issue in the present circumstances.

The Hon'ble Chairman and the members of the Committee gave valuable suggestions on the working of HFRI, Shimla and asked the Institute to work in collaboration with the other sister organizations including the Universities working in the field of forestry,

agriculture and horticulture. Hon'ble Chairman also stressed that the institutions like HFRI should work for the ultimate benefit of end users especially the farmers. Director, HFRI informed the Hon'ble Committee that the Institutes of ICFRE including HFRI has already taken care of the extension of the technologies developed through various research projects, which are being further transferred to the stakeholders through trainings and other related extension programmes. The committee also enquired about the constraint and fund position of the Institute in response, Director HFRI informed that this year ICFRE has received very little funds due to budget cut and hence facing problems in executing its research programmes. The Director, Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change informed the Committee that this issue is being looked after by the Ministry and the problems of funds in ICFRE will be resolved very shortly.

At the end, the Committee also suggested to learn from the developed countries and their models can be adopted. The Chairman and all the Committee members were very much impressed with the achievements of the Institute and highly appreciated the efforts of HFRI. They hoped that the Institute will make its dent in future as is evident from its works.



