

DG, ICFRE addressed a Pres Conference at IWST, Bangalore on 13th Dec. 2012

DG, ICFRE addressed a pres conference at IWST, Bangalore on 13th Dec. 2012 at 4.30 PM which was attended by 20 representatives from many print and electronic media like Doordarshan, ETV Kannada, Praja Vani, Udai Vani, Deccan Herald, Deccan Chronicle, Bangalore Mirror, Rajasthan Patrika, Hindu Business Line etc.



Addressing the press conference, DG, ICFRE informed that a Comprehensive Environment Management Plan (CEMP) for the mining affected areas in the districts of Bellary, Chitradurga and Tumkur has been prepared which targets socio-economic and ecological development. The emphasis is on ensuring sustainable maintenance and development of natural resources and manmade facilities essential for providing desired benefits to the various affected stakeholders. A share of approx. Rs. 30,000 crores from the mining companies is expected from the e-auction of iron ores during the next 10 years, which will be used for the purpose. Of this amount, approximately 62% would be utilized in Bellary, 24.5% in Chitradurga and 10.2% in Tumkur along with 3.4% for other areas and for administrative purposes. The funds will be distributed to 11 different sectors in each of the tree villages. He informed that the fund will be utilise through a Special Purpose Vehicle formed by the Karnataka Government to ensure timely decision-making, effective implementation and proper monitoring and evaluation. The SPV will be headed by the Chief Secretary.

Emphasizing about the forest types of India, he explained that the previous classification given by Champion and Seth in 1968 does not suit the renewed role of forests today, thus calling for change in forest management. Issues like livelihood, hydrology and climate change need to be incorporated into the management and, therefore, ICFRE has undertaken the study on 'reassignment of Forest Type of India' with the following objectives to understand the impact of climate change on forest vegetation, to devise a forest classification from the perspective of forest management, to develop a forest classification system in line with international organizations like FAO and to prepare the changed matrix of forest types of India. The data has been colleted from more that 2000 sites in different forest types across the country which is being analysed. The results obtained so far have shown significant changes in forest structure and diversity at many places which may be attributed to the climate change.



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He informed that ICFRE is conducting a study on "Identification of extent of forestlands in the forest fringe villages" for the National Rainfed Area Authority, Planning Commission, Govt. of India, which is expected to setup standards for formulating strategies for development of rainfed areas. The study assesses forest lands (both qualitative and quantitative assessment) along the fringes of villages with respect to their ecological and productive status. The study will provide an overall picture of the villages in forest fringe areas of 275 districts across the nation. He told that very soon ICFRE is going to launch a project of Rs. 3 to 5 crores involving all the institutes of ICFRE to address the livelihood issues of the tribal people and others people living on the fringes of the forests using a viable forestry based model.

He also informed the media persons that IWST, Bangalore has a unique expertise in India in the field of wood-polymer composites. Considering the enormous benefits that this technology offers, the Tripura Forest Development and Plantation Corporation Ltd and Punjab Forest Department have come forward to use the expertise of IWST, Bangalore in a big way for the benefit of wood based industries in their states.

He informed that IWST has recently identified that extracts of *Garcinia indica* fruit rind could potentially tackle diabetes. Results of the studies on mice have shown a significant reduction in blood glucose levels by 40 to 50% at different time intervals with specific dosages of the extractives.

In response to a query, DG informed that ICFRE has already submitted R&R plan for different mines which will be implemented by the individual mines to improve the conditions and environment in their zone. However, CEMP has a much larger scope where a part of the profit generated by the mining industry out of e-auction (20%) will be used for the overall social and ecological development of all the mining affected areas at district, village and local level. After the press conference, ETV Kannada and Doordarshan, Bangalore separately took the interview of DG, ICFRE on the above issues for telecasting on their channels.

Sh. S.C. Joshi, Director, IWST explained the finer details of the CEMP and informed that in each district, about 50% would be utilized for macro-level activities (i.e. district or region level), 30% for meso-level (i.e. sub-district level) and 20% for micro-level (i.e. villages, Grama Panchayats). The fund allocation between districts is based on certain percentages of weight assigned to a few selected criteria related with each district resources both physical and biological that are used or associated with mining activities.

Dr. M.H. Swaminath, Chair of Excellence, Forest and Climate Change was also present in the press conference and in response to the query from the media persons he explained that salient findings of the work done so far by the ICFRE about the reclassification of Forest Types of India.