

## INAUGURATION OF THE THEMATIC CENTRE OF ENVIS - FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES AND TREE IMPROVEMENT

The subject of FGR conservation and management is gaining tremendous significance world over and particularly in India as the country has a rich repository of FGR particularly tree resources of ecological and economical significance. In view of their socio-economic importance and contribution to the forest based industries, a large number of initiatives have been taken in the country for improving the productivity of forest plantations through tree improvement, involving breeding, biotechnology and silviculture. However, the information on these valuable resources as well as the improvement efforts lies scattered in various statistics and research reports of forest departments, agricultural universities and wood-based industries.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests, has recognised the Institute of Forest Genetics Tree Breeding, Coimbatore for establishment of a Thematic ENVIS on Forest Genetic Resources and Tree Improvement (FGR-TIP). The Centre was formally inaugurated by **Dr. V. Rajagopalan, Secretary, MoEF, Government of India** on 3rd February, 2014 during the Fifth International Casuarina Workshop held at Mamallapuram.



The Director, IFGTB, Dr. N. Krishnakumar, explained the activities envisaged under the ENVIS, the efforts for long term improvement of 30 prioritised species for the country and the establishment of the Forest Genetic Resources Management Network (FGRMN). The Secretary, MoEF appreciated the efforts taken by IFGTB towards Forest Genetic Resources improvement and stated that such a Thematic Centre was the need of the hour.

IFGTB is now entrusted with the responsibility of documenting the existing genetic resources available with various stakeholders across the country for the dissemination of information and create National and International Networking among the users.



Dr. Balakrishna Pisupati, Chairperson, National Biodiversity Authority in his special address congratulated IFGTB for taking up the task of hosting the FGR-TIP ENVIS centre.



Through this effort, the Institute would be able to keep all stakeholders updated on the status of forest genetic resources, provide detailed information on various tree improvement activities already carried out and being pursued on different tree species in various parts of the country for the benefit of all stakeholders which includes research organisations, state forest departments, universities, wood based industries etc.

The potential of FGRs being large in a country like India, where a large sector of the rural population are dependent on forest genetic resources for livelihood security and poverty alleviation, there is a need to churn out large volumes of information on FGRs through research being carried out by various organisations in the country. IFGTB will be the single window information provider on FGR through this ENVIS centre for ecological and economic gain through trees.