

Visit of Mr Khongsak Pinyopusarerk, CSIRO, Australia to IFGTB, Coimbatore

A collaborative project on Expanding carbon sinks through sustainable tree biomass energy production in semi-arid areas of Tamil Nadu, India is being implemented in the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB), Coimbatore with the partnership of Tamil Nadu Forest Department and CSIRO, Australia. The project is funded by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) for a period of two years (2012-14) with a budget of A\$ 52,000. The collaborative project involving Tamil Nadu Forest Department, Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding, Coimbatore and CSIRO Australia aims at pooling knowledge and expertise on raising successful tree planting in semi-arid regions of Tamil Nadu for biomass energy production.

As per the project schedule, Mr Khongsak Pinyopusarerk, Honorary Research Fellow, CSIRO, Australia visited IFGTB and field trials from 06.07.2014 to 10.07.2014. During the visit he held discussions with Dr N. Krishna Kumar, Director, IFGTB with regard to the progress made in the ongoing project and also opportunities to take up new collaborative research activities. He also interacted with the Scientists on supply of new germplasm of *Casuarina*, *Eucalyptus 'mallees'*, *Grevillea robusta*, *Acacia mangium* and *Acacia melaxylon* from Australia and Teak from Thailand. IFGTB will participate in the international provenance testing programme to be coordinated by CSIRO, Australia by hosting at least three trials in Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Mr Pinyopusarerk visited IFGTB's field trials at Salem, Erode and Karur and farmers' plantations of clones released recently. He appreciated IFGTB's efforts in developing high-yielding seeds and clones and reaching them to the farmers' field. He also met officials of two paper industries, Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers Limited, Karur and Seshasayee Papers and Boards Limited, Erode and discussed about mass multiplication of high yielding clones and launching long-term breeding programmes in collaboration with IFGTB to secure raw material supply to industries through increased plantation productivity.

