

**A Report on the Periodical seminar on
“Forest Ecosystem Services: Classification, Valuation and payment for
Ecosystem Services”**

28th June, 2018 IFGTB, Coimbatore

Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding, Coimbatore organized its monthly periodical seminar on 28th June, 2018. As a new initiative, for the first time invitation was given to scientific institutions, training institutes and Universities to elicit wider participation and deliberation on the topic. The participants from other institutions who attended the seminar included Dr. D. Suresh, Professor Economics and 5 Ph. D scholars of Forest College and Research Institute, Mettupalayam, Dr. Elango, Lecturer CASFOS and 41 SFS trainees, CASFOS, Coimbatore. The in-house participants' viz., GCR, HoDs, Officers, Scientists, research staffs, SRFs, JRFs, RAs and FAs of IFGTB also participated in the seminar.

Shri. G. Rajesh, IFS, Head, Extension Division welcomed the gathering and outlined the objectives and importance of periodical seminar and efforts taken by IFGTB over the years in organizing them. Dr. Mohit Gera, IFS, Director, IFGTB presented on the topic **“Forest Ecosystem Services: Classification, Valuation and payment for Ecosystem Services”**.

Dr. Mohit Gera, presented on forest ecosystem services, its classification, valuation, payment and forest economics in an impressive manner using case studies and short videos for bringing in conceptual clarity on the topic. He narrated that globally, forest ecosystems play a key role in the carbon cycle and ecosystem services are the benefits that people derive directly and indirectly from ecosystems and it act as a bridge between environment and human wellbeing. He further stated that forest patches are the provider of services and the people are its beneficiaries. He also pointed out that as per ISFR the Status of India's forest in 2013 nearly 1/3rd of forest is without humus cover and natural regeneration was either absent or inadequate.

The speaker also elaborated on the various ecosystem services viz., provisioning services, regulating services, supporting services and cultural services. Of which, provisional services included genetic resources, food, fibre, timber, fuel wood, fresh water and other NTFPs. Supporting services are the key services which includes soil formation, nutrient cycling, primary production and biodiversity that maintain the conditions for life on earth. While detailing cultural services he added that they are non material and non consumption benefits obtained from forest ecosystems like spiritual, recreational, ecotourism and cultural benefits are key peripheral services which adds social value. He further narrated that the benefits obtained from regulating services includes air quality improvement, climate regulation, carbon related regulating services (forest has the unique quality of removing CO₂ from atmosphere, whereas global

deforestation remains alarming in many countries @13 million ha/year), soil stabilization, enhancement in water quality, biological control and pollination. While debating carbon related regulating services he detailed on the Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) scheme which aims to provide payment for the conservation actions in reducing deforestation.

He elaborated the various valuation methods used to value forest attributes which includes physical linkage method, hedonic pricing method (includes property variable, neighborhood variables, accessibility variables and environmental variables) and contingent valuation method. He also highlighted the “Payments for Ecosystem Services” (PES) which works on the logic of payment for environmental services (clean water, clean air, soil creation, food production, fisheries, timber production, carbon sequestration etc) and other countless benefits that emphasize human wellbeing along with few case studies like case study of Costa Rica. He also pointed that, PES program which was launched in 1997 need to recognize and promote four ecosystem services like mitigation of greenhouse gas emission, hydrological services, protection of biodiversity and provision of scientific beauty (recreation). PES is viewed as a functional tool for the preservation of nature. Overall the seminar invigorated and triggered the awareness about the services rendered by ecosystem and comprehensive mitigation strategies and intensive mechanism to reduce deforestation which is an indirect cause for carbon sequestration and ultimate climate change.

During the course of the presentation Dr. Mohit Gera identified key thrust areas for research in “**Forest Ecosystem Services**” to be given focus by Scientists of IFGTB for study and evaluation. This was followed by vibrant group discussion wherein the speaker clarified the queries raised by the students, trainees and the participants.



Lecture on Forest Ecosystem Services by Dr. Mohit Gera, IFS, Director IFGTB



Dr. Mohit Gera, IFS, Director IFGTB interacting with PhD scholars of FC&RI Mettupalayam



Dr. Mohit Gera, IFS, Director IFGTB interacting with trainees of CASFOS, Coimbatore