

India Land & Development Conference 2020 Session Concept Notes



Special Session: **Realizing the potential of India's forest sector: role of innovative technology, finance and market mechanisms**

Organized by: **The Nature Conservancy-India**

As we start the Decade of Action to meet critical environmental and social goals by 2030, The Nature Conservancy – India (TNC-India) is organizing a workshop on innovative ways to realize the potential of India's forest sector to contribute to these goals. To be organized on March 2, 2020, at the India International Centre, New Delhi, the workshop will comprise of an introductory session and two panel discussions on the role of (i) innovative finance & market mechanisms and (ii) innovative technology in India's forest sector.

Background

India is the tenth most-forested country in the world, as well as one of the 17 megadiverse countries. The country is home to nearly 8% of the globally known flora and fauna, with forests playing an important role in biodiversity conservation. India's forests are pivotal to the country's strategy to combat climate change with an ambitious goal to add 2.5-3 billion tonnes of CO₂e through additional forest and tree cover by 2030.

India's forests are also home to millions of people and play a key role in supporting the livelihoods of 250-300 million people. India has set ambitious goals for biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, land degradation neutrality, and restoration of degraded lands and forests. The resource requirement for achieving these goals is mammoth. Although India's forest sector has traditionally been financed through government budgetary process, many ambitious schemes and programmes have suffered due to budgetary constraints. There is, therefore, a need to explore additional non-traditional avenues of funding, especially those that have worked effectively in other sectors or geographies. These could open new pathways to realize the potential of India's forest sector.

Similarly, better technology is needed to achieve the forest sector goals in a cost-effective and time-bound manner. The Forest Survey of India is already using modern remote sensing and GIS techniques for forest

cover monitoring. Rapid advances in artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies are bringing about a paradigm shift in many sectors. Such technologies can be a game changer for India's forest sector as well.

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Workshop Objectives

The workshop aims to achieve the following:

1. Insights and perspectives on the transformative potential of India's forest sector.
2. A greater appreciation and understanding of the role of innovative financing in India's forest sector.
3. A greater appreciation and understanding of the role of innovative technology in India's forest sector.
4. An intellectual capital formed through networking between the panel members and audience.

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The workshop is intended for field practitioners, researchers, academicians, consultants, NGOs, corporates, donors and policy makers working on issues related to India's forest sector.

02-Mar-20

Panel 2: Realizing the potential of India's forest sector:
role of innovative technology and finance- Special
Session

11.00 - 12.30 Hrs



Welcome Address

Ms Seema Paul, Managing Director, The Nature Conservancy – India

Panellists

India's forest sector: opportunities and challenges

Dr Sushil Saigal, Program Lead-Lands, The Nature Conservancy – India

Transformative potential of India's forests:

Contribution to people's health

Dr Abdul Kareem, Head of Medicinal Plant Conservation Centre, University of Trans-Disciplinary Health Sciences and Technology

Climate mitigation and livelihoods

Ms Amita Ramachandran, Program Lead – India Climate Collaborative

Date and Time: **11:00 – 12:30 hrs | 2 March 2020**

Venue: **India International Centre, New Delhi**