

## Restoring Natural Ecologies 2025

The Ecological Restoration Alliance India held the fourth version of Restoring Natural Ecologies in 2025 on October 27–29 at Cotton University, Guwahati, Assam. The theme of the conference focused on ecological restoration and rewilding, gathering researchers, practitioners, community, youth, movie makers, funders, policy makers, educators, and many other stakeholders in a single platform to exchange ideas, build collaborations, and ideate strategies.

Being organized at the heart of northeastern India, the program emphasized the problems and challenges in that part of the country quite extensively, bringing practitioners and communities from the northeastern regions and discussing solutions that integrate traditional and scientific knowledge. The conference held a combination of events like participant-led sessions, talking circles, movie screenings,



plenaries, network melas, and open circles which actively encouraged engagement of the attendees.

The sessions included restoration journeys & realities, opportunities, and challenges from practitioners like, Divya Mudappa, Rita Banerjee, T. Shankar Raman, Mitesh Damania, Dipal Damania, P. Shyamkumar, Tarsh Thekaekara, and many others from Nature Conservation Foundation, Daruka, Rainmatter Foundation, Nature Future, Green Hub, ATREE, UNDP, Royal Enfield, Aaranyak, and many more.

Dr Sanjay Molur from Zoo Outreach Organisation along with Himanshi Rawat, Green Hub Western Himalaya Fellow screened the movie 'Hope for Coexistence' documenting efforts of the Himalayan Restoration Project in restoring 800+ ha of degraded forest in Chamba, western Himalaya. During the session



Sanjay briefly spoke about the conservation efforts taken by his team to ecologically restore landscape, species, and livelihoods. Following his discussion Himanshi spoke about her reflections on the project and experiences while shooting the film.

Trisa Bhattacharjee also presented a talk on funding opportunities for youth in restoration space across Global South. The talk was majorly based on the different opportunities the Global Landscape Forum offers in the restoration space, and how to popularize those opportunities for youth in India.

The event was invaluable, bringing together multiple stakeholders in the conservation and restoration space strategizing practical restoration actions. The conference worked towards building India's restoration network, presenting successful case studies, and integrating communities in decision making.



**Trisa Bhattacharjee<sup>1</sup> & Sanjay Molur<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1&2</sup>Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India. Email: trisa@zooreach.org, sanjay@zooreach.org

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