

# Learning Beyond the Office: How Zooreach Staff Bring Back Knowledge from the Field

Conservation work thrives not only in forests, oceans, or classrooms, but also in the spaces where people gather to exchange knowledge at conferences, workshops, and collaborative meetings. Over the past year, members of the Zoo Outreach Organisation (Zooreach) participated in a wide range of national and international gatherings. These engagements allowed staff to learn new skills, share field experiences, and bring fresh perspectives back into Zooreach programmes across India.

## Conservation Planning Workshop for the Assam Roofed Turtle

**Date:** 02–05 April 2025

**Location:** Guwahati, Assam

**Zooreach Representative:** Dr. Sanjay Molur and Priyanka Iyer

**Role:** Workshop Facilitator

The workshop organised by Aaranyak brought together forest department officials, researchers, and conservation experts to develop a conservation strategy for the 'Critically Endangered' (CR) Assam Roofed Turtle *Pangshura sylhetensis*. Participants identified priority actions related to research, habitat management, and outreach to guide coordinated conservation efforts.

## 7th Field-Based Training on Advances in Wildlife Research with Special Emphasis on Sloth Bear Conservation in India

**Date:** 09–13 April 2025

**Location:** Mount Abu, Rajasthan

**Zooreach Representative:** Amrin Ansari

**Role:** Workshop Participant and Presenter

The training organized by the International Association for Bear Research and Management (IBA) and Wildlife and Conservation Biology Research Foundation



7th Field-Based Training on 'Advances in Wildlife Research' attended by Amrin Ansari. © WCB Team

(WCB Research Foundation) focused on field research techniques such as camera trapping, animal sign identification, vegetation studies, and wildlife health monitoring. Amrin also presented research on human–bear interactions in the Himalayan region.

## Snake Conservation Scoping Workshop

**Date:** 16–17 April 2025

**Location:** Lonavala, Maharashtra

**Zooreach Representatives:** Dr. Sanjay Molur, Trisa Bhattacharjee, and Payal Molur

**Role:** Workshop Facilitator and Organizer

A 2-day scoping workshop for conservation of snakes in the Western Ghats was organized in Lonavala, Maharashtra to get all the stakeholders on a single platform to set aside opinions and differences and work towards a common goal of snake conservation. This led to the formation of the Snake Conservation Coalition of the Western Ghats with the unanimous decision by the participants to have to Secretariat at Zooreach propelled by Dr Sanjay Molur who was the brainchild of the scoping workshop.



Trisa Bhattacharjee attending the Biodiversity Working Group at the GLF Asia Community and Action Week 2025 and playing the game Solution Trees. © GLF Team

### 2025 GLF Asia Community and Action Week

**Date:** 21–24 April 2025

**Location:** Jakarta, Indonesia

**Zooreach Representative:** Trisa Bhattacharjee

**Role:** Speaker

Organised by the Youth in Landscapes initiative of the Global Landscape Forum, the event brought together young leaders and practitioners working on landscape restoration. Trisa presented the Himalayan Restoration Project, highlighting experiences in landscape restoration and community-based conservation.

### Species Management Planning Workshop for Small Wild Cats in Assam

**Date:** 21–26 April 2025

**Location:** Assam

**Zooreach Representative:** Dr. Sanjay Molur and Priyanka Iyer

**Role:** Facilitator

The workshop organized by Aaranyak brought together forest department officials, researchers, and conservation practitioners to develop science-based strategies for conserving six small wild cat species in Assam. Using participatory planning tools developed by the IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group, participants identified threats, research needs, and collaborative conservation actions.



Trisa and the team doing the biomapping activity in Mount Halimun Salak National Park. © Ana Yi Soto

### Landscape Leadership Camp 2025

**Date:** 25–29 April 2025

**Location:** Mount Halimun Salak National Park, Indonesia

**Zooreach Representative:** Trisa Bhattacharjee

**Role:** Participant and Presenter

The programme explored community-based agroforestry models and landscape restoration approaches through field visits, mapping exercises, and discussions on education and community engagement in conservation.

### International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB 2025)

**Date:** 15–19 June 2025

**Location:** Brisbane, Australia

**Zooreach Representative:** Dr. Sanjay Molur

**Role:** Award Recipient

Dr. Molur received the Society for Conservation Biology's Distinguished Service Award, recognizing his long-standing contributions to conservation science, including leadership in IUCN species assessments and biodiversity initiatives across South Asia.

### 3-Day Hands-on Training Workshop on Integrative Taxonomy of Marine Organisms

**Date:** 19–21 June 2025

**Location:** Chennai, Tamil Nadu

**Zooreach Representative:** P. Kritika

**Role:** Workshop Participant



**3-days Hands of Training Workshop on Integrative Taxonomy of Marine Organisms attended by P. Kritika. © Sathyabama Team**

The workshop organized by Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology introduced participants to integrative taxonomy methods combining morphological identification with molecular tools such as DNA analysis to better understand marine biodiversity.

### 1st Indian Seagrass Conference (ISC-2025)

**Date:** 20–22 August 2025

**Location:** Chennai, Tamil Nadu

**Zooreach Representative:** Tandrali Baruah

**Role:** Session Presenter

In the conference organized by Sathyabama



**Tandrali Baruah presenting seagrass stories at the Indian Seagrass Conference. © Chinmaya Ghanekar**

Institute of Science and Technology Tandrali shared experiences from community-based seagrass outreach along the Tamil Nadu coast, highlighting participatory learning tools such as the “Food Chain Jenga” game to demonstrate trophic relationships and ecosystem balance.

### Tropentag 2025

**Date:** 10 September 2025

**Format:** Virtual (Hosted from Germany)

**Zooreach Representative:** Trisa Bhattacharjee

**Role:** Panelist

The discussion focused on tropical landscape multifunctionality and how landscapes can support biodiversity, livelihoods, and climate resilience simultaneously.

### Trends and Challenges of Invasive Alien Species of Kerala

**Date:** 8–9 October 2025

**Location:** Aaralam Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala

**Zooreach Representative:** Sidharthan

**Role:** Seminar Participant

Participants discussed the growing ecological impacts of invasive species in Kerala's ecosystems, including the spread of non-native fish species in freshwater habitats.

### Alliance for Conserving Freshwater Ecosystems (ACFWE)

**Date:** 9–10 October 2025

**Location:** IISER, Kolkata

**Zooreach Representative:** Priyanka Iyer

**Role:** Participant

The meeting convened at IISER Kolkata brought together organizations working on freshwater conservation across India to discuss collaboration, data sharing, and strategies to address pollution, habitat degradation, and governance challenges affecting rivers and wetlands.

### IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025

**Date:** 9–15 October 2025

**Location:** Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

**Zooreach Representative:** Dr. Sanjay Molur

**Role:** Forum Member and Speaker

Dr. Molur contributed to discussions on conservation funding, philanthropy, and freshwater ecosystem resilience, drawing from decades of conservation planning experience. He also represented Zooreach, member of IUCN in policy decisions through the forum's meet.

### Restoring Natural Ecologies Conference 2025

**Date:** 27–30 October 2025

**Location:** Guwahati, Assam

**Zooreach Representative:** Dr. Sanjay Molur and Trisa Bhattacharjee

**Role:** Speaker

The presentation highlighted youth partnerships and funding opportunities supporting restoration initiatives across India.

### Namma School Namma Ooru Pali Regional Conclave

**Date:** 03 November 2025

**Location:** Salem, Tamil Nadu

**Zooreach Representative:** Rengasamy Marimuthu

**Role:** Participant

The conclave brought together government representatives, NGOs, and corporate partners to strengthen collaboration and support government schools across Tamil Nadu.

### NSNOP School Engagement Workshop

**Date:** 17–18 November 2025

**Location:** Chennai, Tamil Nadu

**Zooreach Representative:** Rengasamy Marimuthu

**Role:** Participant

Discussions focused on strengthening collaboration with schools and improving programme planning and monitoring systems under the NSNOP initiative.

### Snake Rescue Lab Workshop

**Date:** 8–9 December 2025

**Location:** Bengaluru, Karnataka

**Zooreach Representative:** Dr. Sanjay Molur and Amrin Ansari

**Role:** Facilitator



APAC Leadership attended by Tandrili Baruah in Hong Kong.  
© Sonika Manandhar

The workshop brought together snake rescuers and conservation practitioners to discuss scientific rescue protocols, safe handling practices, and the development of standard operating procedures for snake rescue in India.

### APAC Explorer Leadership Workshop

**Date:** 8-12 December 2025

**Location:** Hong Kong

**Zooreach Representative:** Tandrili Baruah

**Role:** Participant

The workshop, organized by the National Geographic Society, focused on collaborative leadership. Through group activities and exercises, participants explored communication, negotiation, and team-based project planning for conservation initiatives.

### BioConserve Summit 26

**Date:** 30 January 2026

**Location:** Bengaluru

**Zooreach Representative:** Dr Sanjay Molur

**Role:** Participant

The one day conference on biodiversity in campuses was organized by Infosys and Indian Institute of Human Studies in Bangalore where several CSRs, institutes, organizations, NGOs, and individuals dealing with urban sustainability, biodiversity, and circulation were presented and discussed.



### India Animal Welfare Forum 2026

**Date:** 31 January 2026

**Location:** Mumbai, Maharashtra

**Zooreach Representative:** Dr. Sanjay Molur

**Role:** Panelist

Hosted by the Upadhyaya Foundation, Dr. Molur participated in a panel session along with three other partners of the newly formed Snake Conservation Coalition of the Western Ghats on snake conservation, addressing myths about snakes and emphasizing science-based approaches for human–snake coexistence. The official website of the Coalition was also launched.

### National Conference on Climate Change and Livelihood Scenario in Dryland

**Date:** 20–21 February 2026

**Location:** Bhuj, Gujarat

**Zooreach Representative:** Dr. Sanjay Molur

**Role:** Keynote Speaker and Panelist

The conference organized by Gujarat Institute of Desert Ecology highlighted the ecological and livelihood importance of India's dryland ecosystems. Dr Molur presented a keynote address on dryland ecosystems and the conundrum faced by this unique ecosystem due to various issues including climate change. He also was a panelist on the subject along with six other experts.

### MAGSCON

**Date:** 24–26 March 2026

**Location:** MAHE, Manipal, Karnataka

**Zooreach Representatives:** Dr Sanjay Molur, Priyanka Iyer, Trisa Bhattacharjee, and Poojitha Dupati

**Role:** Panel Moderator, Presenter, and Exhibition Stall Manager

The Manipal Global SDG Convergence is a 3-day event organized by MAHE to showcase the best practices followed by all stakeholders in promoting sustainable development. Dr Molur will be moderating a panel of experts on Climate Action, Biodiversity & Conservation, and Food Security on 24 March 2026. In addition, Priyanka Iyer, Poojitha Dupati, Aakanksha Komanduri, and Trisa Bhattacharjee will man the exhibition stall promoting the organization's works as well as Trisa Bhattacharjee will be presenting two posters at the conference.

### Conclusion

These conferences, workshops, and meetings demonstrate the diverse ways in which Zooreach staff engage with the wider conservation community. By participating in national and international platforms, team members gain new knowledge, share field experiences, and build collaborations that strengthen conservation initiatives. The insights gained from these gatherings continue to inform Zooreach's work across landscapes, species conservation, environmental education, and community engagement.

**Tandrili Baruah\*, Trisa Bhattacharjee, Amrin Ansari, Priyanka Iyer, P. Kritika, Sidharthan, Dupati Poojitha & Sanjay Molur**

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