

## Regional Workshop on Freshwater Biodiversity Conservation

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Biodiversity conservation is the foremost agenda in many countries that have a strong inclination towards sustainable economic development. India enjoys the status of being one among the mega biodiversity countries in the world. Eastern Himalayas and Western Ghats in India have been recognized as the hotspots of biodiversity characterized by rich endemism of both flora and fauna. Indian tradition and culture have safeguarded the biological wealth for several thousands of years. Population explosion, rapid industrialization and urbanization have resulted in climate change that pose a very serious threat to the very existence of life on earth. Heat waves, cloud bursts and monsoon failure are very common now in our country resulting havoc and economic loss to the nation.

Educational institutions have a greater role to play in creating awareness about the environment and need to safeguard biodiversity. Understanding the nature begins with the observation of our surrounding, enumeration of the living organisms around us and appreciation of their role in nature. Considering this a "Regional Workshop on Freshwater Biodiversity Conservation" was organized by the Department of Zoology of Ayya Nadar Janaki Ammal College, Sivakasi in collaboration with the Zoo Outreach Organization, Coimbatore on 1 August 2014 as an attempt to bring together the students of the colleges in this region and make them to contemplate about the ways and means of conserving the freshwater biodiversity at their places. The inspiration for the workshop was from the products of the CEPF project 'The *Sahyadri* Freshwater Biodiversity Conservation project' by Zoo Outreach Organization.

Shree V. Ayyan Kodiswaran, Correspondent of ANJA College inaugurated and released the workshop manual. Dr. V. Pandiyarajan, Principal, Presided over the inaugural session. Dr. M.A. Haniffa, Emeritus Scientist and Director, Center for Aquaculture Research and Extension (CARE), St.Xavier's College, Palayamkottai delivered the inaugural address with the focus on the theme "*Freshwater Fish Biodiversity and Conservation*". Dr. R. Suresh Kumar, Assistant Professor of Zoology, Raja Doraisingam Govt. Arts College, Sivagangai delivered the Plenary address with the focus on the theme *Conservation of Freshwater Habitats*". Mr. R. Brawin Kumar, Researcher, Zoo Outreach Organization, Coimbatore conducted the post lunch session Keeping the theme as "*Understanding Freshwater Biodiversity and Conservation Strategies* making use of the educational package developed by ZOO during CEPF Project period. More than 100 students from six

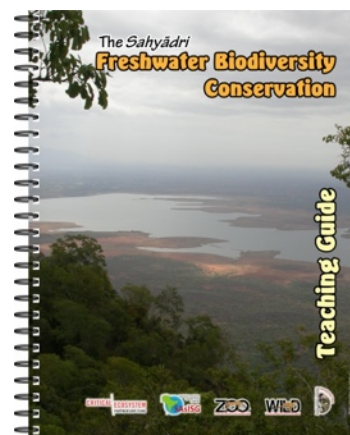


Display of the publications and educational packages of ZOO



Release of the workshop manual on "Freshwater Biodiversity Conservation"

colleges in this region enthusiastically participated. Necessary arrangements were made by the Convener, Dr. M.K. Rajan, Associate Professor and Head, PG & Research Department of Zoology and the Organizing Secretary, Dr. L. Isaiarasu, with the support of the faculty and research scholars.



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