

First National Stakeholders Consultation Workshop

“CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF POLLINATORS FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, THROUGH AN ECOSYSTEM APPROACH”

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The Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of India, identified the G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development (GBPIHED), as the national executing agency for the PDF-B project (Project Development Facility-B), project on “Consultation workshop for conservation and Management of pollinators for sustainable Agriculture, through ecosystem approach” that is being implemented by UNEP, approved by GEF and executed by FAO. The institute, under the leadership of Dr. Uppeandra Dhar, Director, GBPIHED organized the first National Stakeholders Consultation meeting during October 8-9, 2004 in Almora.

The objective of the PDF-B project is to further the understanding of the issues related to the decline of pollinators that will lay the basis for activities in the Full-size project, and to design the full size project. The preparatory requirements to achieve this will focus on information collection, and analysis, establishment of local/national/regional/global priorities, and development of implementation strategies. Participating countries (Brazil, Ghana, India, Kenya, Nepal, Pakistan, and South Africa) and other stakeholders in the Full-size Project will be identified, collaborative effects will be established, and the donor co-financing will be mobilized during the PDF-B stage. This project aims to provide the added global benefits of information exchange, the dissemination of good practice, capacity building and exchanging knowledge at the farm, country, regional and global levels.

On the first day of the two day workshop, Dr. Uppeandra Dhar, welcomed the chief guest Ms. Linda Collette, Senior Officer (Crop Biodiversity) FAO, Italy, and the diversified gathering from the different sectors, like academists, scientist, NGO's and farmers (see Annexure II. List of participants). While addressing the gathering he highlighted 'Pollinators' as the focus of the workshop. In the keynote address he explained how human welfare is linked with pollinators. He explained how agriculture, conservation, wild species and sustainable development, the four major phases of pollinators are linked and emphasized the need for a holistic approach for conservation. In context to the workshop theme on mountains he said that the Himalayan mountain has a unique geographical setting and has diverse biological and cultural practices but has an extreme vulnerability. He also said that the Indian Himalayan region is unique that beats geological formation and the mountain people are largely dependent on biological sources, so maintenance of biological resources are very important. He also pointed out with details on Indian Himalayan region agricultural crop and community diversity. At the end he briefed about the work plan of the workshop process.

Ms. Collette Linda, in the inaugural address while explaining the GEF frame work said FAO, will be responsible for the implementation of the project to fulfill the objectives. UNEP, as the GEF Implementing Agency, will be responsible for overall project supervision to ensure consistency with GEF and UNEP policies and procedures, and will provide guidance on linkages with related UNEP and GEF-funded activities. The inaugural ended with the vote of thanks by Dr. P.P. Dhyani.

The technical session after the inaugural chaired by Dr. Subadra Devy, started with a session of presentation by Ms.

Collette Linda about full size project include PDF-B phase and its implementation process at international and national level. She also presented about the preliminary Global Log Frame for the Full-size project. Dr. B.A. Daniel chaired the second technical session that had nine presentations. The trend and status of fruit and crop pollinators, the practice of traditional knowledge practiced was reviewed by the presenters.

In continuation of the second session the participants were divided into three working groups viz., Eastern Himalaya, Central Himalaya and the Western Himalaya to discuss and draw the matrix of activities, gaps, opportunities on the following topics: Review / Status of pollinators in your area; Inventory of local management practices and traditional knowledge; Identify target pollinators groups; Pollinator – plant interaction; Capacity building mechanism. The groups present their points of discussion. As a concluding remark of the first day's meeting, Linda pointed out that the work that is being done in the workshop will be presented at the International Steering Committee meeting in December 2004 by the National Nodal agency.

Day 2: One of the main objectives of the workshop is stock taking of current status of pollinators in different parts of Indian Himalaya. Linda Collette explained the details of this exercise and the following topics were addressed:

1. Assessment of the status, habits and interactions of pollinators/reasons for pollinator decline;
2. Local management practices and traditional knowledge;
3. The enabling environment (market incentives, economic valuation, policy frameworks, capacity, etc);
4. Review current on-going activities and collect baseline data on related initiatives;
5. Current knowledge/capacity on pollinator conservation and sustainable use and
6. Existing databases and other information networks.

Ms. Linda Collette, briefed the guidelines that has to be followed while doing the stocktaking exercise and explained that the GEF is a co-financer and the GEF pay for the portion of the cost of the Full-size project.

The session on work plan was chaired by Dr. O.P. Agarwal. The participants, based on their expertise committed to provide information to a regional point person

It was decided that reports from the regional point persons should reach the nodal agency by 25th October 2004. It was also decided by the workshop participants that the National partners will be identified by the nodal agency after the completion of the stocktaking exercise and the date of the second workshop will be finalized and announced later. In the concluding session Dr. Uppeandra Dhar thanked all participants for attending the meeting. Ms. Linda appreciated the involvement and commitment that she observed from the participants. Dr. R. Varatharajan thanked the GBPIHED, Director and all the staff for hosting and thanked Ms. Linda for leading the workshop.



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