

Forest Certification: A Marketing Tool for Sustainable Forest Management

Programme Director: Prof. Manmohan Yadav

December 09-10, 2010

at
Indian Institute of Forest Management

A Compulsory Training Workshop on the topic “Forest Certification: A Marketing Tool for Sustainable Forest Management” was conducted at IIFM during December 09-10, 2010 for the officers of Indian Forest Service. The programme was sponsored by the Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India and was conducted by Prof. Manmohan Yadav IIFM faculty and Coordinator Centre for SFM & Forest Certification. The programme was attended by 16 senior forest officers from Goa, Utrakhand, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Nagaland, Assam, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Meghalaya and New Delhi.



The program comprised of presentations by subject experts, experience sharing from the industry/forestry sector and panel discussions among the participants and with the facilitation by the experienced resource persons. It covered detailed discussions on the emerging subject of forest certification, its relevance and implications for India.



In view of increasing concern for forest products, which are originating from sustainably managed forests has led the emergence of concept of Forest Certification as an important market driven tool and a mechanism for assessment and monitoring of forests from the point of view of environmental soundness, social desirability and economical viability. It is a process involving an independent third-party assessment of forest areas, its management practices and the chain-of-custody of the products coming from the forests based on a predefined standard. Two internationally accepted forest certification programmes have emerged during the last one and half decades – FSC and PEFC. Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is the most recognized forest certification (FC) scheme and labeling programme by the consumers and the industries. Initially started as a Pan-European Forest Certification Scheme (PEFC) in 1999, this forest certification program has now become a global program with its focus on bringing harmonization between the global certification standards

and the National Forest Certification standards & processes. Accordingly it has renamed itself as to the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes since 2005 and has since then recognized 30 national forest certification schemes across the globe. Similarly, a Number of international initiatives have emerged based on the Principles, Criteria and Indicators approach to sustainable forest management. The Indian initiative for development of Criteria & Indicators (C&I) for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) was undertaken by Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Bhopal in 1998 with 8 criteria and 51 indicators developed for SFM in India through multi-stakeholder consultative process. This has been refined over the years and now it has been renamed as the National Set of Criteria & Indicators for SFM in India with 8 criteria and 37 indicators and is under consideration of the Government of India, Ministry of Environment & Forests for inclusion in the Working Plan code, a guiding document for preparing Working Plans for management of forests in the country.

The programme was highly appreciated by the participating officers with an overall rating of 8.6 on 10 point scale.

(Manmohan Yadav)

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