



# SERInews

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*With you in Pursuit of Sustainable  
Management of Finite Water Resources*

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**Point for discussion this month** **Sanctuary - boon or curse?**

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## Eternal Words

"We call them dumb animals, and so they are, for they cannot tell us how they feel, but they do not suffer less because they have no words."

*~Anna Sewell, Author of Black Beauty*

Animals are such agreeable friends; they ask no questions, they pass no criticisms

*~ George Eliot*

People everywhere depend upon biodiversity for their livelihoods, their quality of life, and to provide basic ecological services on which all life depends

*~ The Business and Biodiversity Resource Centre*

In wilderness is the preservation of the world.

*~ Henry David Thoreau, American writer (1817-1862)*

Dear Readers,

Tourism is always a learning experience. But most of the visitors consider it as entertainment and leisure activity. Many a times, untidy minds result into throwing waste unscrupulously very serene, tranquil, peaceful, beautiful areas. Secondly, regulations of restricting visitors from experiencing the bounties of nature need to evolve to educate them how to co-exist with nature. The livelihood comes through conservation and exploitation brings profits. What do you prefer? Conservation or exploitation? Coexistence or solitary life? SERI is involved in developing ecotourism projects which will boast the concept of conservation through open door learning of natural processes and coexistence through conservation.

SERI had a proud moments when it's two budding scientists presented their papers in Ranchi's international conference on "Anthropogenic Impact on the Environment and Conservation Strategy (ICAIECS)," Ranchi. Pallavi Patil presented paper on ecological restoration of polluted stream complex of Rasoolabad in Allahabad on the bank of Ganga River. The project was an unique contemplation of Hindu Gurus to support for the cause of Ganga cleaning! She presented the scientific monitoring results of the outcomes of restoration project. Pradnyesh Agre presented an account on ecotourism and its potential for economic upliftment of the people living in remote areas, in the buffer and core zone of protected forest areas. Both the papers, concepts were well-received in the gathering of scientists from the corners of India.

Sandeep Joshi, ecotechnologist presented a new set of performance parameters for evaluation of ecological restoration projects for sustainable management of lentic-lotic systems in the international conference Ecosummit 2012 in Columbus, Ohio, US organised by The Ohio State University, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), Ecological Society of America (ESA), Society of Ecological Restoration (SER) and INTECOL.

The cover photo is of Bandhavgarh National Park, Madhya Pradesh India.

Thank you,

Chief Editor

## The Supreme Court of India Lifted the Ban on Tiger Tourism in core area

The Supreme Court of India on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2012 lifted the ban on tourism in core areas reserved for the wild cat, the bench's direction came after Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Indira Jaising informed the court that the notification was formally issued on October 15 for 41 tiger reserves across the country.

The apex court permitted for regulated, low-impact tourist visitation in 20% of the core areas of the country's 41 tiger sanctuaries and approved the government's new guidelines that regulate tourism. The environment ministry is yet to demarcate the 20% area.



A bench of justices A K Patnaik and Swatanter Kumar gave green signal for resuming tourism activities; modifying its July 24 order by which all tourism related activities in Tiger reserve areas were halted.

The tourism activities in the Tiger reserve areas henceforth would be strictly in accordance with the notification on tiger conservation, issued by the National Tiger Conservation Authority on October 15, wrote Justice Patanaik while preparing order.

While lifting its interim ban on tourism activities in the core tiger reserve areas, the apex court, however, added, "We make it clear that we have not held the guidelines either intra-vires (constitutionally valid) or ultra-vires (unconstitutional)."

The court also directed the respective state governments to prepare the Tiger conservation plan within six months from Oct16, 2012 and submit the same to the tiger conservation authority. The states have to notify the list of core and buffer areas of tiger reserves in their respective jurisdictions, under the guidelines and the rules of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 of Indian Constitution.

Earlier on July 24, the court had banned all tourist activities in the core areas of tiger reserves by decision to a PIL filed by conservationist Ajay Dubey that demanded removal of commercial tourism activities from core or critical tiger habitats in the tiger reserves.



On August 29, the apex court had extended the interim ban on tourism activities in core tiger reserve areas till September 27.

While extending the ban, the bench had indicated that it was not averse to permit regulated tourist activities, subject to the Centre evolving suitable revised guidelines to protect the depleting wild cat population.

The court on October 9 had allowed the Centre to notify its fresh guidelines on tiger conservation within a week that was placed before the court on September 26. This guideline is formulated for sanctuaries following the apex court's interim ban.

In its guidelines,

- The government has said that for preserving tiger population, no new tourism infrastructure should be created.
- Permanent tourist facilities located inside core/critical tiger habitats, which are being used for wildlife tourism, should be phased out as per a time frame.
- Envisaged keeping visitors at a distance of at least 20 meter from all forms of wildlife and prohibiting them from luring or feeding any wildlife.
- The core zone is critical tiger habitat notified by the government where no human activity is allowed. Tiger breeding takes place in the core areas which are to be kept free of any human activities, including tourism.

The bench said any party aggrieved by the notification will have the liberty to challenge the same before the appropriate authority.

## Ecosummit 2012 at Columbus, Ohio

- Representative

Sandeep Joshi, India's ecotechnologist participated in Ecosummit 2012 which was organised in first week of October at Columbus, capital city of Ohio State. It was successful conference with participation of more than 1700 delegates from all over the world working various themes of ecological restoration. The organiser of conference was Dr. William Mitsch, water prize winner who developed Wilma H. Schiermeier Olentangy River Wetland Research Park 15 years back. Other invitees were Dr. Sven Jorgensen, water prize winner, President of Iceland, Dr. Rattan Lal, faculty of Ohio State University etc.



Sandeep Joshi's theme of presentation was "Assessment of stream, river, and lake restoration projects based on ecotechnological approaches and ecosystem principles". He stated that the river and lakes restorations projects were not infrastructure but ecological health initiatives. Ecological restoration is centred on revitalization of self-purification capacity of water body while converting single species or no species water body into multi-species living aquatic system. Finally, he gave a detailed account of entirely new set of performance criteria for evaluation of ecological restoration of lentic-lotic water systems viz. SAB (Saprobic to Aerobic Biodiversity), CFC (Complexity of Food Chain), NSR (Native Species Recurrence), CF (Carbon Footprint), SF (Space Footprint), NB (Nitrogen Balance), EE (Economic Efficiency) and COP (Community Ownership of Project). His evaluation of Udaipur's Ahar River Restoration and Hyderabad's Medi Kuntha Lake Restoration in comparison with conventional systems was well-appreciated by dignitaries participated in the conference. He expressed that value-based performance evaluation with respect to COD, BOD are incomplete and sometimes misleading, so there is need to use more comprehensive evaluation scheme for ecological restoration projects.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Anthropogenic Impact on the Environment and Conservation Strategy (ICAIECS), Ranchi, November 2 - 4, 2012**

- Representative

Ever since its origin and later man has enjoyed the natural resources and has adversely affected the environment in due course of civilization and economic growth. The greed beyond the need and the attitude of consumerism of mankind has brought the environment today at a critical juncture. Various anthropogenic activities like industrialization mining, chemical based agriculture, deforestation, habitat destruction, introduction of exotic species, overexploitation etc. have brought us to an alarming stage where there is no point of return without proper conservation strategy. The environment needs conservation to provide sustainability and survival of man.

Keeping the present plight of environment the focus of strategy for betterment has changed from Stockholm to Rio+20. The present 4<sup>th</sup> ICAIECS was organized by National Environmentalist Association (NEA) in association with St. Xavier's college, Ranchi, India during November 2-4, 2012, in capital city of Jharkhand, which is very rich in natural resources both above and below ground, to discuss

conservation strategy in context of globalization and local situation ranging from gene to ecosystem.

The major topics on which papers were presented in the conference included Pollution, Loss of Biodiversity and conservation, Impact of mining, reclamation and green Mining, Environmental Geology and Green Technology, Seri, Lac, api and Pisciculture in changing environment, toxicology and ameliorating agents, environmental Biotechnology and Microbiology, GMOs, Tissue culture and bioremediation & environmental chemistry, EIA and sustainability development, Environmental Policies, laws and Legislations.

The venue was St. Xavier's college, Ranchi, India. Opening ceremony took place in presence of more than 300 delegates including international participants from SAARC and European countries in spacious auditorium of Ranchi University. There was considerable presence of Indian delegates and especially academic persona. Pre-conference proceedings volume as special volume of "The Ecoscan" is published and released during inaugural function.

Mr. Baijanath Ram, Honorable Human Resource development Minister, Jharkand graced the opening ceremony with his presence and elegant talk. Prof. L. N bhagat (Vice chancellor, Ranchi University), Fr. Nicholas Tete s.j. (Principal St. Xavier's College, Ranchi), Fr. Christian de Brouwer s. j., President of NEA Prof. M.C. Dash (ex. Vice Chancellor, Sambalpur University) Prof. M. P. Sinha (secretary, NEA) were also present at the occasion.

Plenary Lectures and valedictory function took place in auditorium of Xavier's college.

Dr. Raha from Australia described about strategic approach for reduction of carbon footprint in Australia and talked about carbon market.

Prof. Bhagat enhanced views on legal provisions for environment protection and its flaws. He concluded with point that though India has strong legal provision there is lack in its strong implementation.

On Nov.2, 2012 Pallavi Patil, Env't. Executive, Shrishti Eco-Research Institute's (SERI) presented research paper, "Water Quality Assessment at Rasoolabad Stream Complex eco-restoration Project, Allahabad, India" co-authored by Dr. Pramod Salaskar and Pradnyesh Agre The paper discusses about the changes in the water quality parameters before and after the eco restoration of 5 drains, polluting Ganga River at Rasoolabad Ghat, Allahabad. She explained the Gaps and failures of Ganga action Plan to eliminate pollution from the holy River Ganga. The eco restoration project at Rasoolabad is a collective effort of SERI and GRIN with Blessings of Ganga Seva Abhiyanam. The chairmen of session appreciated this noble approach

of religious saints coming forward to free the Holy Ganga River from curse of pollution. This was done without use of electricity and with cost effective Ecotechnology like green bridges and green Rolls.

On Nov.3 Pradnyesh Agre, Env't Officer, SERI, presented his paper "Ecotourism: Ecological and Economical Contrivance Towards Sustainable Development", co-authored by Sandeep Joshi, Pallavi Patil, and Sayali Joshi which was applauded by the international audience. This paper was considered for Young Scientist Award competition. He explained how the ecotourism will help to improve socio-economic status of far-flung areas with gifted natural resources and biodiversity marked as no development zone or eco sensitive zone. He explains how the ecotourism can be a contrivance for sustainable development with case study performed by SERI in Konkan - One of the ecological Hotspot declared by UNEP. Most of the papers presented were of monitoring of case studies. Very few papers were solution oriented.

The posters presented by Indian delegates and research scholars were self explanatory of the environmental status in India. Some of posters showed adverse impacts of mining. There were some excellent posters on anthropogenic activities on living organism's physiology.

A spectacular cultural program enhanced glory of the evening on both days. The traditional folk dances were well appreciated by the delegates.



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