

Project Update: February 2013

Since first RSG awarded in 2008, the project and my mission to save the riverine resources has evolved. The evolution of my mission from species specific conservation efforts to ecosystem level conservation effort has shown many successes. However, considering the vast area of any even small river basin and thousands of stakeholders involved in the common property resource, there is a need for continuation work. During previous RSGs I have tried my best to link riverine resource conservation with the livelihood generation of local people. For this I used potential of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guaranty Act 2005 (MNREGA) and did tremendous work of eco-restoration in the basin area. However, this work was very much sporadic in the basin as there is great imbalance in the availability of labour in the basin area. Thus, this time I am specifically targeting on the selected river stretches for the direct eco-restoration work. For this work I believe, there is need to link eco-restoration work with the enhancement in the local irrigation potential and upliftment of the farmer's economic status.

Team Building: A very strong and committed team of volunteers has been set up. The team has tied in the Self-Help Group" and monthly meeting on first Sunday of every month has been decided. Committed volunteers consist of Sanjay Bhagat, Pawan Mishra, Arvind Kankirad, Ganesh Sawarkar, Sanjay Dhawak, Ambadas Khadase, Ambadas Doiphode, Pradip Yevatikar, Bandu Ingole, Gajanan Ahmadabadkar, Palandas Ghodeswar etc.

1. **Advocacy and capacity building of team members:** 1st November 2012. Visited Washim, our district place with project team to meet various government officers including NABARD and Agriculture Department. Team members had discussion with various government departments regarding various schemes for the upliftment of farmers, fishermen and for the river conservation.
2. **Capacity building of team and monthly planning:** 5th November 2012. Meeting of SAMVARDHAN Self Help Group held at Vilegav village.
3. **World fisheries day and issue of fish conservation in India:** 21st November 2012. On the occasion of World fisheries day, jointly with South Asian Network on Dams, Rivers and People (SANDRP) a letter has been sent to MoEF and Prime Minister India on the issue of riverine fisheries and urged to take concrete steps to conserve it.
4. **Spreading the words:** 24th November 2012. Learning from the RSG project has been delivered at a workshop arranged at Aurangabad.
5. **Establishment of rights of local people on natural resources:** 21st and 22nd January 2013. Participated in Forest Right Act workshop held at Mumbai jointly arranged by Kalpvriksha and Tata Institute of Social Studies (TISS).
6. **Capacity building workshop regarding various acts and policies:** 3rd February 2013. One-day workshop at Brahmanwada regarding various acts and policies of government of India. Jointly arranged by Local court and Samvardhan.

7. **Establishment of local groups:** 3rd February 2013. A group of farmers under NABARD has been established at Aurangpur village.
8. **Establishment of local groups:** 7th February 2013. A meeting arranged with the people of Ladegav regarding establishment of Farmer's Group under Nabard.
9. **Forest survey:** 13th February 2013. Visited forest patch of the Murmadi village. Villagers conserved a large patch of forest.
10. **Establishment of local groups:** 24th February 2013. Meeting at Babapur and Jamathi people regarding establishment of Farmer's club.
11. **Advocacy:** 26th February 2013. Meeting with CEO, ZP at Washim regarding various schemes of government for rural people.
12. **Exposure visit of team member:** 1st March 2013. Field visit to Kamalganga river rejuvenation program near Murtizapur. Here local people conserve a small river of Tapti basin.
13. **Planning the river march:** 2nd March 2013. Samvardhan Self Help group meeting and River march planning workshop held at Bhivari.
14. **River march:** 7th March 2013. River March from Zodga dam to Belkhed Kamatha village has been arranged (report preparation is in progress).
15. **Plantation:** Last year a forest land of 100 ha has been fenced in Bembla river basin to grow naturally occurring plant. Now plantation of 15,000 plants has been beginning.
16. **Establishment of decision making and conflict resolution systems:** 14 groups of villagers has been established at Vilegav, Brahmanwada, Kamargav, Ladegav, Wapati, Belkhed, Kamtha, Pimpalgav, Bhivari, Bhamdevi, Babapur, Jalalpur, Aurangpur and Kurhad villages.

