

## **Project Update: September 2013**

A historical step to make river conservation project sustainable has been taken by us. As mentioned earlier, more than 80% geographical area in the basin is occupied by the agriculture land. Due to degrading state of agriculture area it is in turn affecting the health of riverine habitats and ultimately aquatic biodiversity. Bundh-less agriculture giving way to increased siltation, the economic situation of concerned farmers due to various ecological and other reasons is also the matter of concern which in turn affecting on their capacity to repair their own landscape area. Same is true with the fishermen of the area. In this scenario, it is essential to make farmers and fishermen self-sufficient economically as well as knowledge wise. We have started a process of formation of farmer, laborers and fishermen's group. During last few months we have started a process of conversion of these rather informal groups into Producers Company as per Company Act 2013 of Government of India. The name given to this producer company is GREENZA Producers Company Ltd. The basic aim of the company to apply entrepreneur approaches for the conservation of natural resources, to restore the traditional cropping pattern, to make farmers capable to preserve their agriculture so that the harm to riverine resources will be minimise and so on.

Regular meetings have been arranged at various villages. Due to intense rainfall in the area in these 4 months there was lot of hindrances in the field work, thus we have concentrated on the development of Producer Company of local people and advocacy related things.

1. In the last 2 years 100 ha of land in the Bembla river basin has been developed by forest department with inputs from SAMVARDHAN. This year plantation of 16000 tall plants has been done in the same. Ones completely degraded ecosystem is improving its status.
2. 12<sup>th</sup> July 2013. Participated in the "Lower Painganga Anti Dam movement. The Painganga River is an important river of the Godavari basin. A dam has been proposed at the confluence of river Adan and Painganga which is ecologically destructive project. SAMVARDHAN is providing scientific inputs to the movement of people.
3. 17<sup>th</sup> July 2013. This year heavy monsoon comes with havoc in the area. The agriculture area badly affected due to floods. Discussion with Down to Earth Team regarding havoc made by this year's monsoon. An article on this issue has been written by Aparna Pallavi. Inputs has been given by SAMVARDHAN. The article can be accessed here [Rain Lash](#)
4. 19<sup>th</sup> July 2013. Samvardhan has becomes project partner with a small grant provided by Paul Haymen Foundation (PHF), UK through CORO, Mumbai. One day brainstorming meeting regarding this project has been arranged at *Vinoba Vichar Kendra*, Nagpur. The main objectives of this grant is to build the capacity of SAMVARDHAN and associated team members.
5. 4<sup>th</sup> August 2013. Project team monthly meeting and brainstorming has been arranged at Kamatha village.

6. 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> August 2013. Two days field work in the Bembla river basin has been arranged with the Aparna Pallavi, principal correspondence, Down to Earth Magazine to understand the pattern of the spread of invasive alien species of the freshwater fishes. During this field work a dialogue has been initiated with the fishermen of Brahmanwada and Belkhed-Kamatha. As a step to advocacy of the problem of invasive species of freshwater fishes an article has been published in leading environmental magazine "Down to Earth". The article can be accessed here [Silent Invasion](#)
7. 12<sup>th</sup> August 2013. Pune. A presentation has been made at UNDP – MOEF small grant comity at Pune. The 5 years' work with Rufford Small Grant has been elaborated at the workshop.
8. 13<sup>th</sup> August 2013. Visit has been made to various government offices regarding incorporation of Producer Company and other advocacy related things to capital of state, Mumbai.
9. 18<sup>th</sup> August 2013. A brainstorming meeting has been arranged at Karanja regarding the setup of Producer's Company of local farmers.
10. 21<sup>st</sup> August 2013. Nagpur. Brainstorming meeting regarding PHF project has been arranged at Nagpur.
11. 24<sup>th</sup> August 2013. Akola. Dr. Nilesh Heda, Arvind Kankirad and Adv. Sumant Bandale have visited CA Ashish Heda at Akola to understand the future entrepreneur endeavor of GREENZA.
12. 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013. One-day brainstorming meeting has been arranged with the farmers of Bembla basin to discuss various conservation and producer company activities.
13. 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> September 2013. Two days' workshop has been arranged at Sevagram regarding goal setting, SWOT analysis, and sustainability in the project, etc. Dr. Nilesh Heda, Sanjay Bhagat, Ganesh Sawarkar and Arvind Kankirad attended the meeting. The workshop was an opportunity for the team members to analysis the past 5 years work regarding river conservation and its future direction.
14. 14<sup>th</sup> September 2013. Mumbai. One-day workshop has been arranged at Mumbai at the resident of Ms. Mamta Chhangani, business head V9 resources. The main aim of the workshop to understand various technical parameters of the producers' company, its role in the future sustainable resource conservation and its linkages with the international export of the bio-resources.



Left: Survey of Agriculture by project team members. Right: Monthly meeting with the farmers at Bambarda village.



Left: A process with the school students. Right: A process with the youths of fishermen community at Belkhed Kamatha village.



Left: Team members showing intensity of soil erosion in the area. Right: Plantation at the Karanja city forest.