

Project Update: April 2012

January 2012

New Year begins with many hopes, new ideas and paradigm shift in the thinking about conservation. The riverine habitats of the area are in many ways affected and influenced by the surrounding agriculture area as about 70 % land use is agriculture area. Keeping this in mind we have intensively started our conservation work with local farmers.

Thinking and acting about agriculture: January 2012 first week: Had discussion with the farmers of Bembla river basin. One joint programme of awareness and planning has been decided.

Krishi Chintan Shibir (brainstorming workshop on agriculture thinking): 6th January 2012. One-day workshop with the farmers of Bembla river basin has been arranged at Kamargav village. The main theme of the programme was “we can change our condition”. About 100 people participated in the programme. People from the Agriculture Department, NABARD, Panchayat Samity have been invited for the presentation. The programme was important as new thinking about the agriculture, its impact on riverine resources, and new ways to improve the profit in the agriculture has been decided in the programme.

Agriculture university visit: 11th January 2012. Visited Panjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth, Akola (PKV). PKV is one of the largest universities of this area dedicated for the research in the agriculture.

Involving college students in the conservation work: 13th January 2012. Delivered lecture about river conservation at J.D. Patil College, Daryapur.

Discussion with thinkers: 16th January 2012. A discussion meeting was arranged with notable politician and thinker Mr. Harish Mandhane and Dr. Arun Jain regarding sustainable agriculture.

Joining hands with microfinance for economical strengthening of local people: 18th January 2012. Was invited to participate in the brainstorming discussion arranged by NABARD bank regarding microfinance in the rural area arranged at Akola.

Involving policy makers: 23rd January 2012. A meeting was arranged with MLA Mr. Prakash Dahake regarding forest regeneration at Karanja City.

Exposure visit: 21st January 2012. An exposure visit was arranged to visit “Agriculture symposium” arranged at Amravati.

Field work and discussion meeting: 24th January 2012. Field work and discussion meeting with the labourers and fishermen of the Dhamani villages, regarding alternative livelihoods.

Field visit forest rejuvenation sight: 25th January 2012. Fieldwork at Karanja city forest site with MLA Mr. Prakash Dahake and Forest Department officers.

Involving college students: 27th January 2012. A lecture was delivered at Pratibha Tai Tidke Vykhyanmala (Lecture series), Murtizapur.

Involving college students: 31st January 2012. GYAGYASA Bus (Curiosity Bus) is a mobile van developed by Central Pollution control board provides information about different aspects of the biodiversity. Display of GYAGYASA bus has been arranged for the student's at Karanja.

February 2012

Advocacy and its impact on forest regeneration in the Bembla river basin: 7th February 2012. Adjacent to Karanja city in the Bembla river basin there is a 100-ha barren land in the possession of Forest Department. The land is barren without any vegetation and vulnerable to encroachment and soil degradation. Due to policy level influence by RSG team member's government declared the land for the development of the natural forest. Government also allocated initial funding of 10 million rupees for the rejuvenation purpose. The inauguration of this eco-restoration work started at forest sight. About 1,000 people participated in the programme.

Involving college students: 10th February 2012. Was invited for the youth workshop arranged for the university students arranged at Sohul Blackbuck sanctuary.

Involving farmers: Participated in the Farmers meet at Donad village.

Ecological field work: 19th to 25th February 2012. Fieldwork with Mr. Rohitashwa Shukla, Indian Institute of Science Education was arranged to Bembla and Katepurna river basin. Fish sampling and habitat characteristics have been documented.

March 2012

My RSG supported conservation work is now acknowledged by the international community of thinkers, scientists, and NGO people. In this connection, I am going to portray our work at *Planet Under Pressure* conference held at London, from 25th to 29th March 2012. The conference venue is new London International Convention Centre (ICC) at Excel. For this tour, Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford provided funding support to me.

I am one of the conveners of a session titled *Conservation of freshwater ecosystems: towards sustainable management for future generations* (Tuesday 27th March 2012 - Options and opportunities, 16:00). In addition, I am presenting a poster titled *"Linking conservation of wetland resources with livelihood generation: Case study from Central India."* (Poster session 2, Tuesday 27 March, from 17.30 – 19.30.)

April 2012

After returning from London involved in the activism with eco-restoration labourers of entire district area. The NREGA act stipulated payment of work must be made within 15 days at most. However, the labourers of entire district have not received wage payment for 2 to 3 months. Regarding this sent letters to Minister of Rural Development, secretary and all concerned departments. Newspaper campaign has been initiated and agitation with labourers has been declared, as a result entire system suddenly becomes aware about the issues and payment of the laborers has been released (Delayed payment of about 3.5 crores rupees = ₹409,619). I believe this is the greatest achievement of project.

Majdoor Sangh River Conservation Societies (RCS) has been set up at Vilegav, Kajaleshwar, Aurangpur, Kajaleshwar, Dhamani, Ladegav, Palana, Antarkhed villages.

11th April 2012. I was invited as a president for a foundation programme of Mohan Murkute Smruti Pratishthan.

15th April 2012. A meeting with the like-minded friends has been arranged at Aurangapur village. Joint entrepreneur has been decided to improve the financial condition of the people.

18th April 2012. Self help group has been established.

20th April 2012. Meeting with collector regarding delay in labour payment.

21st April 2012. Meeting with the people of Vilegav village regarding delayed wage payment and future planning of the micro basin.

