

## **One week IFS Compulsory Training Course on “Forest Certification for Sustainable Forest Management”**

One week IFS Compulsory Training Course on **“Forest Certification for Sustainable Forest Management”** concluded at IIFM during 09-13 February, 2009. The programme was attended by very senior forest officers from the states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Himachal Pradesh. The programme sponsored by the Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India and was conducted by Prof. Mnamohan Yadav & Prof. PC Kotwal, faculty members at Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM).

Forest Certification has emerged as a market tool for communicating the good management practices in a forest to the consumers of forest products. Though, this concept is more popular in the developed markets but it is also gaining consumer awareness in the Indian premium market segments. IIFM is doing the pioneer work in this field of forest certification by conducting such training programmes and research through field studies.



The programme focused on the third party assessment of forest management practices known as forest certification. Such assessment has been necessitated in an environmentally conscious world where consumers in developed markets show their preferences for such products that come from sustainably managed forest. Forest Certification is intended to link trade in forest products to the sustainable management of forest resources by enabling producers and consumers to recognize products made from timber / NWFP coming from sustainably managed forests. The requirement of forest certification while promotes sustainability concerns through the concept of triple bottom line (Ecologically sound, Socially desirable and Economically viable practices) it also poses threat to products of developing countries to the developed markets as technical barrier to trade under WTO rules.

Apart from presentiaions on the key concepts of Forest certification, case studies from Indonesia, Malaysia and India were discussed during the programme. The participating officers were also exposed to various innovative models initiated in the

state of Madhya Pradesh like good collection, processing, packaging and marketing of minor forest produce (MFP) based products through its brand Vidhya Herbal. The MFP processing units at Barkheda Pathani and Sanjeevani outlets were visited by the participants. These products are sold through the Federation's own retail outlets called Sanjeevani as well as through other government and private retail shops. The participating officers visited the Vidhya Herbal products provide a good value for money to the consumers and better markets for the MFP collectors in Madhya Pradesh.

They also visited the Delabadi eco-tourism site in Ratapani sanctuary started by MP Eco-tourism Board and the MP State Tourism Development Corporation.

The IFS training programme was inaugurated by Mr. R.K.Dave, IFS, Managing Director, M.P. Minor Forest Produce Federation. Very experienced and distinguished forest officers like Dr. Ramprasad, Shri A P Dwivedi, Shri V R Khare (all former PCCFs of MP), Shri S P Singh Additional PCCF (HRD) and IIFM Director Prof. B P Pethiya & faculty members like Prof. Rekha Singhal and Prof. H S Gupta, Dr. MD Omprakash also interacted with the participating officers.

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