



Report
on
International Mountain Day 2023



Organized by

EIACP Programme Centre
on
Forest Genetic Resources and Tree Improvement
ICFRE-Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding
(Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education)
Coimbatore

International Mountain Day 2023 Celebrations by ICFRE-IFGTB EIACP PC

As part of Mission LiFE and in connection with International Mountain Day 2023 EIACP (Environmental Information, Awareness, Capacity Building and Livelihood Programme) Programme Centre (erstwhile IFGTB ENVIS) Resource Partner on Forest Genetic Resources and Tree Improvement at the ICFRE-Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding, Coimbatore organized an awareness campaign to the NSS volunteers of Government Arts College, Coimbatore. The campaign sought to shed light on the unique characteristics, significance, and challenges faced by mountain ecosystems, aiming to inspire individuals and communities to actively contribute to their conservation and sustainable management.

Dr Kannan CS Warriar, Scientist F and EIACP Coordinator presented a musical tribute on the significance of mountain ranges in India based on slokas in Vedas. Meaning of these slokas in Sanskrit was also explained. In his awareness lecture, Dr Kannan CS Warriar explained that mountains cover around 27% of the Earth's land surface and host about half of the world's biodiversity hotspots. As the water towers of the world, they supply freshwater to an estimated half of humanity. Mountains are home to an extraordinary range of plants and animals, and to many culturally diverse communities with different languages and traditions. From climate regulation and water provisioning services, to soil maintenance and conservation, mountains are key to our lives and livelihoods. Yet mountains are suffering from the impacts of climate change and unsustainable development, escalating risks for people and the planet, Dr Warriar added. He also highlighted that climate change threatens the flow of water, and fast-rising temperatures are forcing mountain species and the people that depend on these ecosystems to adapt or migrate. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, up to 84% of Endemic Mountain species are at risk of extinction, while populations of a range of other montane plant and animal species are projected to decline and face extinction. While highlighting the recent biodiversity agreement of the 2022 United Nations Biodiversity Conference, Dr Warriar explained that it pledges to protect 30 percent of the Earth's lands, oceans, coastal areas and inland waters by 2030 – provides an impetus to revive and protect mountain landscapes. The UN General Assembly also recently proclaimed 2023–2027 "Five Years of Action for the Development of Mountain Regions" in its triennial resolution on sustainable mountain development.

Dr John Prasanth Jacob, Scientist G and Head of the Forest Protection Division, inaugurated the event. He highlighted that mountains are increasingly attracting significant

tourist flows, playing a crucial role socially and educationally. These natural landscapes offer recreational, therapeutic, and sporting opportunities. Dr Jacob emphasized that mountain tourism not only safeguards the environment, natural resources, and wildlife but also brings socio-economic benefits to local communities while preserving cultural heritage. Dr Jacob underscored the fact that our country boasts some of the world's largest and most stunning mountain ranges, yet their fragile ecosystems face threats due to irresponsible human behavior. He stressed the importance of sustainable development, emphasizing the balance between meeting current needs and safeguarding the needs of future generations. He urged everyone to collaborate in protecting these vulnerable mountain ecosystems.

Dr C. Kunhikannan, Director explained that the multifaceted benefits of mountain ecosystems, emphasizing their indispensable support for humans and other ecological systems. These ecosystems play a crucial role in providing essential services such as freshwater resources, climate regulation, and soil conservation. Additionally, mountain environments contribute significantly to biodiversity conservation, housing unique and often endangered species, he added. Dr Kunhikannan emphasized the interconnectedness of these ecosystems, illustrating how their well-being is intertwined with the health of the broader environment. In recognizing their pivotal role, he urged a collective commitment to preserving and sustaining mountain ecosystems for the benefit of present and future generations.

An eco-tour to Nilgiri Biosphere Natural Park (NBNP), Anaikatti was organized for the students to provide real time exposure to the significance and conservation of forest genetic resources and their role in preserving the mountain ecosystems. Shri Solomon Raj, Botanist NBNP guided the students and explained the role of NBNP in promoting the conservation of the fauna and flora of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve (NBR). The primary objective of the NBNP is to create awareness among the people about the natural heritage of the Nilgiris Biosphere. Since its establishment, NBNP has successfully restored and helped growth of many different vegetation types - over 430 species of 25,000 plants of which 85 species are found only in NBR. A zoo at the NBNP is aimed at attracting people to its location, he added. Dr V. Sivasankari, Associate Professor of Botany and Dr N. Poonkodishri, Assistant Professor of English participated in the awareness campaign and ecotour. Dr S. Vigneswaran, Senior Programme Officer, EIACP PC proposed the vote of thanks.











**EIACP Resource Partner on Forest Genetic Resources and Tree Improvement
ICFRE-Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding**

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education)
P.B.No. 1061, Forest Campus, R.S.Puram PO, Coimbatore - 641 002

INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN DAY - 2023

Theme : "Restoring Mountain Ecosystems"

International Mountain Day 2023, under the theme "Restoring mountain ecosystems" offers an opportunity to enhance understanding of the significance of mountain ecosystems. It encourages the promotion of nature-based solutions, adoption of best practices, and investments aimed at fostering resilience, diminishing vulnerability, and enhancing the adaptability of mountains to both daily challenges and extreme climatic events.



Benefits of Mountains

Provides home
for **1.1**
billion people

Host about half
of the world's
biodiversity
hotspots

Origin of 6 of
the 20 most
important food
crops

Forests
cover around
40% of the
global
mountain
area

Provide upto
60-80% of
the world's
fresh water

Poster No.09/16/18/19/20/21/22/23