

REPORT
on
CELEBRATION
of
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FORESTS, 2018
at
HIMALAYAN FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE, SHIMLA

Himalayan Forest Research Institute (HFRI), Shimla, Himachal Pradesh celebrated **International Day of Forests** with the theme “**Forests and Sustainable Cities**” on **21st March 2018**. All the Officers, Scientists,



research support staff, ministerial staff and contractual staff of HFRI, Shimla participated in the celebration.

At the outset, **Sh. Ashwani Kumar**, Assistant Chief Technical Officer, Agroforestry & Extension Division, HFRI, Shimla briefly apprised about the importance of the celebration of the International Day of Forests and welcomed all the participants.



Shri Sanjeev Kumar, DCF, Agroforestry & Extension Division, HFRI, Shimla welcomed the speakers of the event Dr. Vaneet Jishtu, Scientist, HFRI and Dr. V.P.Tewari, Director HFRI and all other participants in the programme. In his

welcome address, Sh. Kumar briefly highlighted about the importance of celebration of such events in creating the awareness.



Dr. Vaneet Jishtu, Scientist, HFRI, Shimla gave a **power presentation** on the theme of the International Day of Forests “**Forests and Sustainable Cities**”. Dr. Jishtu gave brief background about the celebration of International Day of Forests and then spoke at length about the problem of unplanned urbanization leading to limited green spaces available in the cities with special focus on Shimla. Dr. Jishtu informed that the city of Shimla, once the summer capital of British India was planned for a population about 25 - 30 thousand population,



but now the same city caters to population of more than 02 lakhs, thereby gradually shrinking availability of green spaces in the city over the years. Finally, he spoke about the major threats of urban green spaces of Shimla due to various factors viz. increase in population and unplanned urbanization, landslides etc.

Dr. V. P. Tewari, Director, HFRI, Shimla delivered a **key note address** on the occasion. Dr. Tewari while giving a brief background about the celebration of the day said that **International Day of Forests** was established on the 21st March, by resolution of the United Nation's General Assembly on November 28, 2012. Since then, various events are organized to raise awareness about the importance of all types of forests for the benefit of current and future generations. Dr. Tewari said that each year there is a specific theme, and this year's theme is "**Forests and Sustainable Cities**". He nicely gave the global overview of the cities which has the best planned green spaces, as well as the cities which rank poorly in maintaining the urban green spaces. Dr. Tewari presented the scenario of urban green spaces in Indian cities as well. He said that Indian urban cities are also shrinking gradually. He cited the example of Bengaluru which was earlier known as 'City of Garden' is also slowly changing into 'City of Concretes'.



Dr. Tewari stressed the importance of trees in urban green spaces not only for storing carbon and mitigating climate change but also for active and healthy life styles that helps in improving mental health, prevent diseases and provide a place a for people to socialize. He further said that forests and trees in urban areas help in reducing the air and noise pollution.

In his concluding remarks, he said that it is important for all of us to create awareness about the enormous benefits of urban green spaces so that our cities sustain for a longer duration for our own survival.



The programme ended with the **vote of thanks** by **Shri S.P. Negi**, Head of Division, Agroforestry & Extension Division, HFRI, Shimla to the Director and Dr. Jishtu for delivering their stimulating talk with wealth of information and sensitizing about the importance of urban green spaces in the cities. He also thanked all other participants for attending the programme and hoped that the celebration of the event will have deep impact on our life so that we always strive to conserve our forests in our cities.

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Glimpses of the Event

