



Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Learning Group Workshop showcases economic benefits of sustainable biodiversity management



The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity – India Initiative (TII)

The Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change (MoEFCC) and GIZ's Indo-German Biodiversity Programme organized a deliberating workshop on 5th and 6th February 2015, at which the preliminary findings of several Coastal and Marine Ecosystems valuation studies were presented to a specially formed learning group. The studies, commissioned under the Indo-German Biodiversity Programme, put the spotlight on the relevance of ecosystems economics in decision making and planning processes, and are being conducted from the economic, ecological and social perspectives.

The learning group comprised national and state level senior government officials from the forest and

fisheries departments, and eminent experts from premier scientific and research institutions, NGOs, and academic researchers. Their collective feedback will be incorporated to make these studies more incisive. This workshop is an affirmative action, and part of a series of workshops by the Indo-German Biodiversity Programme to create a common platform for peer learning that would lead to concrete solutions.

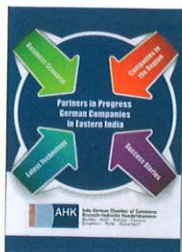
The well-researched studies are expected to recommend tactical and simple pathways to catalyse interest, spark community dialogue and participation in biodiversity conservation. Most importantly, they are expected to start a public debate on the economic benefits of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and enable change at the local and policy level. The peer-reviewed studies will suggest specific

measures to support a better economic paradigm, and will be crucial in the decision making processes. These studies focus on topics ranging from Seasonal Fishing Ban, Eco-labelling as a conservation tool, to mangrove restoration and reduction of by-catch in marine fisheries.

The workshop was moderated by Dr. J. R. Bhatt, (Advisor), MoEFCC. Hem Pande, Additional Secretary, MoEFCC, during his introductory address, expressed that the ministry was proud of its partnership with GIZ. He mentioned that the ministry was committed to encouraging ecosystems economic approaches, the TII being an outcome of this commitment. Germany prominently supported the international TEEB study, and is supporting Brazil and India to implement national TEEB initiatives.

Edgar Endrukaitis, Director of the Indo-German Biodiversity Programme emphasized, in his opening remarks, the importance of the studies for policy making. The studies will showcase the economic benefits and will provide more knowledge on functions of nature respective coastal and marine ecosystem services. This could help to improve the coastal and marine management.

Dr. Bhatt said that he was happy that the learning group had engaged in such a vibrant debate, and had served as a receptacle and think tank for ongoing and future research in this area. All the participants unanimously expressed that, going forward, such debates are the need of the hour and should be institutionalized.



Partners in Progress – German Companies in Eastern India

The publication "Partners in Progress – German Companies in Eastern India" aims to provide a snapshot of West Bengal and the other States of Eastern India. The region indeed has a great potential for business, for which, the IGCC would like to increase awareness amongst visitors and potential business partners from abroad. Rich natural resources, a well-educated talent pool and the closeness to South-East Asia are some of the advantages that the region of Eastern India offers. Since the opening of our Kolkata office in 1957, IGCC has promoted business relations between Germany and the region. The company profiles in the publication offer a snapshot of what opportunities exist.

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