

FRI and Welspun Energy Ltd to Work for innovations in Forest Carbon finance
India needs innovations in Climate Change mitigation and adaptation: Dr. V.K. Bahuguna,
Director General ICFRE
‘Grow Forest Mechanism’ for sustainable development of degraded forest lands and
developing carbon sink

The Forest Research Institute (FRI) in collaboration with M/S Welspun Energy Ltd. is organizing a workshop on 28th May 2013 at Forest Research Institute, Dehradun for promoting industry driven plantation in a PPP mode that will help in climate change mitigation and generate carbon credits as well. The workshop is aimed to achieve a broader and inclusive consensus on Policy issue promoting carbon forestry and carbon markets

Dr. Bahuguna in his inaugural address stressed that India need innovations in entire Climate Change mitigation and adaptation: Dr. V.K. Bahuguna, D.G.ICFRE. Dr. Bahuguna further said that in India about 2 lakhs villages are situated around fringe forests and forests help us for mitigation and adapting to climate change. Innovations are needed on how to involve our communities and research organisations to play a major role in Climate Change mitigation and adaptation. There is need to aware people at grass root level about mitigation and adapataion of climate change.

With Kyoto protocol of UNFCCC coming into force since 2005, world governments adoapted legally binding measures to tackle climate change. Now Carbon has become a tradable commodity. Forests remain an important sink of CO₂ and were included in the offset scheme under Clean Development scheme (CDM) of Kyoto Protocol. CDM in Forestry is under-represented in compliance carbon markets representing less than 0.1% of total CDM projects registered globally. However, there are brighter outlook incoming initiatives, for domestic projects in voluntary markets globally.

Forest carbon has found more fertile ground in the voluntary carbon market. Today Forest carbon accounts for more than 20% of global voluntary market, though small in volume. Voluntary carbon markets have allowed the emergence of innovative tools and compliance-grade forest carbon offset supply but the demand side needs to be addressed, as the voluntary market is not sufficient to drive the growth of forest carbon. Predictable and reliable government actions further needed. Governments and business should interact on the issue of voluntary action around climate change mitigation, said Dr. P.P. Bhojvaid Director FRI.

India needs domestic offset schemes to engage private sector players. Perform Achieve and Trade (PAT) is one such initiative has been taken in Energy sector. The failure of CDM Forestry has led to success of voluntary schemes

The current policy frameworks address the issue of land diversion for industrial purpose solely in a quantitative manner. The policy makers need to develop a sustainable solution wherein the forest conservation activities result in sustainable forest cover in qualitative terms and not quantitative i.e. it should result in an equivalent or better canopy cover within a defined time frame.

In order to explore a possible solution in this direction by developing degraded forest lands for environmental sustainability and sustainable infrastructural growth of the country, a non-commercial initiative with an involvement of private sector organizations to reforest and maintain degraded forest lands as part of Corporate Social Responsibility has been initiated. The concept aims towards incentivizing the increase in forest canopy cover through a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model said Mr Raghunath Mahapatra of Welspun Energy Ltd.

Dr. T.P. Singh, ADG (FCC) gave an overview of the workshop, In the first session Mr. Raghunath Mahapatra from Welspun Energy and Dr. Mohit Gera from Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy made presentations. The session was Chaired by Dr. Promode Kant of Institute of Green Economy.