

FORESTRY RESEARCH NEEDS TO COPE WITH GLOBAL CHANGES – THE SOUTH ASIAN PERSPECTIVE

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Some Critical Global Environmental Issues

Air

- CO2 emission:
1800-1950 > 0.2 ppm/p.a
1960 < 1.3 ppm/p.a
6 fold increase
- Dust Storms, Smog and Acid Rain

Land

- Land degradation:
 - Soil erosion (e.g. Bangladesh 1b tons p.a.)
 - Deforestation ('75-'90: 220m hectares)
 - 20% Pasture and rangeland damaged

Water

- Demand tripled in last 50 years
- Ground water table falling (1m p.a.)
- Rivers dry (e.g. Several Himalayan Rivers in India, Nepal)
- Glaciers retreating, GLOF

Biodiversity

- Species extinct (1972-2002)
 - 24 percent mammals and 12 percent bird
- Deforestation rate
 - 14.6 million ha annually

The South Asian Region

- Quarter of the World's population
- About 43% of the World's poor and
- Only 2% of the World's GDP.
- Unprecedented Environmental crises due to Forest Destruction all over the region
- Large Scale erosion of water catchments causing widespread adverse downstream effects
- Large Scale Timber Pulpwood and fuelwood shortages

South Asia and the World

	GDP/capita (US\$)	Adult Literacy (%)	Life expectancy (years)	Population Growth (1975-2000) (% per annum)
World	7,446	--	66.9	1.6
Developing Countries	3,783	26.3	64.7	1.9
South Asia	2,404	44.4	62.9	2.1

UNDP, 2002

South Asia Forest Resources in Some South Asian Countries

Country	Total Forest Area in 2000 (million Ha)	% of Land Area	Forest Plantations in 2000 (million Ha)	Annual Change between 1990-2000
Bangladesh	1.3	10.2	0.60	1.3
Bhutan	3.0	64.5	0.02	ns
India	64.1	21.6	32.6	0.1
Nepal	3.9	27.3	0.10	-1.8
Sri Lanka	1.9	30.0	0.30	-1.6

Although Forest cover has increased in Bangladesh and India, conversion of Natural forests to other land uses continues having adverse impact on Biodiversity

Causes of Adverse Impacts on Forests

- **Fast growing regional economies**
- **Economic development**
 - ➔ **environmental degradation**
- **Very high population growth (uncontrolled)**
- **Food Security-Hunger for land**
- **Unfettered industrial growth without due environmental considerations**
- **Major demographic shifts including intense urbanization leading to great demand for Forest Products**
- **Poverty**
- **Lack of education**

The vicious cycle of Poverty, Development and Loss of Forests



South Asia perspective: Limitations and Constraints of Forestry Research :

- ❖ Little or no Political support for Forestry Research in any country
- ❖ Lack of Sustained Funding
- ❖ Negligible interaction between researchers, Users and Potential users of Research Results
- ❖ Absolute dearth of Research Extension services
- ❖ Low levels of Research trainings and Interactions between research Institutions within and in between countries
- ❖ Lack of an updated Coordinated regional Research Information Network
- ❖ Lack of need based research

South Asia perspective: Limitations and Constraints of Forestry Research (Contd...):

In most countries is --

- Government Controlled and totally funded by them
- Research done on a *ad-hoc* basis and based on researchers discipline during his college years
- Research compartmentalized with no cross discipline research
- Publication in Journals and presentation at Meetings were the main priority
- Private sector participation totally lacking
- Research institutions not professionalised to enhance sustainable use of forests and economic competitiveness of the forestry sector

Current Emerging Challenges :

Time for reappraisal of Forestry research in the changing Global scenario to adapt to :

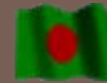
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation and Payment for Environmental Services-Quantification studies of ES
- The REDD approach
- Forestry for rural development Interlinkages between Forestry-Socio-Economic factors and development
- Enhance sustainable forestry use as well as Economic competitiveness of the forestry sector vis a vis other sectors in the rapidly developing South Asian economies
- Direct research to improved business operations and support formulation of similar forest policies
- Research on Conservation Land Use Planning and Management of whole landscapes as current food shortages will again increase forest land hunger for Agriculture.

The Way Ahead :

- Identify Major Problems or common concern in FR to the region
- Formulate collaborative transboundary Projects and get financial and technical support for their implementation
- Enhance Networking of National FRIs while building self reliance. Also build bridges with both private and global forestry sector research institutions
- Develop a South Asia Research Updated and comprehensive information system that is easily accessible to all stakeholders
- Promote easy technology transfer and dissemination of research results to endusers at cost effective prices
- Increase research priority on interdisciplinary research to increase understanding of vital role of forests in the rapid sustainable economic development of the countries where forestry is considered a means and not a hindrance to environmentally sound development

The Way Ahead : (Contd...)

- Increase research activity on promoting community participation in forestry development through determining alternate incentive mechanisms
- Ensure need based research and quick and effective lab to land transfer of research results to Managers
- Last but not the least develop Policy briefs for bureaucrats and politicians to educate them of the importance of research in forestry so that financial support to forestry research could grow on a similar scale as that of agricultural research that rose from 4% during the 1970s to about 10% in the 1980s- the times of the green revolution in India and hopefully we will have
- ***“the Brown Revolution in South Asia where there will be forest Products in Plenty just because Forestry research had reinvented itself and paved a golden future for Forestry in the South Asian Region”***



Thank you for your kind attention!

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