

**Training Volunteers and Youth to enhance the Skills
and Knowledge in Conservation of Tropical Forests**

Training Conducted By

PRAKRUTI/PSK
BASAVARAJ NILAYA
CHOWKIMATH, SIRSI-581401
UTTARA KANNADA
KARNATAKA
INDIA

AUGUST 2005

**WITH THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE NETHERLANDS
COMMITTEE FOR IUCN/TRP**

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Table of Contents

1.0. Introduction:.....	3
2.0. Workshops on Personality Development and Ecology.	3
3.0. Volunteers training workshop, Venue: Siddapur.....	6
4.0. Volunteers training workshop: Venue: Vanalli	8
5.0. Training workshops for volunteers: Sirsi.....	14
6:0. Training Youth (College students) on environmental issues.....	16
Themes:.....	16
6.1. Major functions performed by forest ecosystem:	16
6.2. Non Timber Forest Products:.....	16
6.3. Wild Foods:.....	17
6.4. Land, Land Use Planning, Sustainable Land Management.....	17
6.5. Field work:	17
6.6. Post Fieldwork:	18
7.0. Volunteer training Vanalli	18
8.0: Envirionmental Awarness Camp at Yedalli.....	20
9.0: Environmental Awarness Camp at Ajjibal	26
10.0. Impact:	30

Training Volunteers and Youth to enhance the Skills and Knowledge in Conservation of Tropical Forests

1.0. Introduction:

Traditional system of forest management is getting eroded and it is believed that now this system alone cannot help forest restoration. The knowledge about forest, forest resources and management practices are also disappearing in the modern era from older generation to younger generation. The study conducted by Prakruti in the Western Ghats of Karnataka reveals that there is 48 percent loss of knowledge from one generation to another. Through this voluntary and youth training workshops Prakruti is aiming to build knowledge on environment to school children and youth and to give idea about skills in environmental management. In the training workshops we tried to include environment education, traditional management skills and personality development. Fourteen workshops and training camps were organised in the project period January 2002 to September 2005. Youth of age 17 to 26 years participated in the training camp/workshops. Forestry and environment scientists, environmentalists, community leaders, VFC (Village Forest Committee) representatives and Traditional Herbal Medicine Persons and Ayurvedic doctors participated in the event.

Objectives:

1. To create awareness on forest and various environment problems in the region and to educate them about traditional and modern skills in natural resources management.
2. To involve these trained youth in conservation of Natural Resources.
3. To build second line leadership for nature conservation.

2.0. Workshops on Personality Development and Ecology.

1. Date: 26 – 28, May 2003

Place: Raitha Bhavan, Market Yard, Sirsi

2. Date: 6-7, September 2003

Place: Jungle Lodges and resorts, Dandeli.

The main themes of the workshop are as follows.

- a. Introduction
- b. Team work
- c. Personal-Professional Effectiveness
- d. Development Vs Conservation
- e. Study skills
- f. Ecology
- g. Gender and environment

In the first five themes the subject of society and our life, inter dependence in society and nature, family and institution were discussed. What are in the society, family and its relation? How it will inter dependence with each other? How does it play important role? Effects? These were also discussed in detail.

Secret of success in life desire, commitment, responsibility and hard work, attitude, skill and knowledge are also discussed.

Group discussions, games, lecture demonstrations, slide shows and short field visits were the techniques used in the workshop to train the youth.

Conservation/Activism

Under conservation group discussions were on environment and pollution. Discussions on water pollution air pollution and soil pollution were held. We mainly had attention on water problems and plastics. Mr. Shridhar Desai gave information on medicinal plants and traditional medicines.

Gender and environment

This topic gave the participants an opportunity to understand the relationships between man and women. The role of women in conserving the forest, the importance of forest to women was also discussed. Nutritious foods available in the forest in the form of wild foods and several medicinal plants used particularly to treat disease related to women and during pregnancy and after birth were also discussed. Mr. Sridhar Desai, a traditional herbal medicine man explained in detail about these issues.

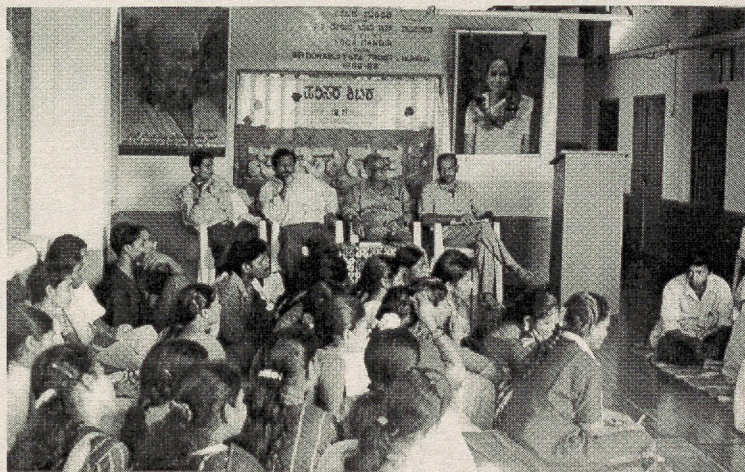
Shilpa from Sirsi said, "We have greatly benefited by this workshop. We learnt lot about our surrounding environment. It was a great experience having attended the workshop. We would like to do something to conserve environment".

Quthar Bhanu from Muslim Galli Sirsi "The programme gave us an opportunity to discover our uniqueness and creativity. And to expand the way we think, learn, communicate and relate to people. The days we attended, were not just the days of joy, but the root to our future, our beginning, progress and success".

Jyoti and K.R. Vishwanath from Sirsi "We realised the minute we start talking about what we are going to do to conserve forest. It is essential to conserve our soil and water resources".

Prabhavati and Ratnamala from Dandeli said that "The only thing that stands between a person and what he wants from life is often merely the will to try it and the faith to believe that it is possible. Finally with proud we express our immense gratitude to the teachers who inspired us to protect ecology and environment".

Figure 1: Youth mainly girls from indigenous community participating in environment training.



3.0. Volunteers training workshop, Venue: Siddapur

Date: June 5, 2004

A one-day training camp was held in Siddapur, Uttara Kannada District. The objective of the training camp is to create awareness to youth on current problem in conserving the natural resources.

Twenty-five participants including twenty-three women are participated in the camp.

Initially meaning of environment, bio-diversity and importance were explained to the participants. Then the participants were divided into two groups. The first group was asked to identify uses of forest and forest trees. The second group was asked to identify causes of pollution and causes for forest degradation.

Then the group members presented their findings.

The first group identified the uses of forests and forest trees, increase soil fertility, revenue, labor opportunities, food fodder and timber. Control of soil erosion, ground water recharge and use of forest to reduce silting were also discussed. Use of trees in making pulp, paper and other raw materials for various industries, medicinal plants and other resources available in the forest are also presented.

The second group discussed the air, water pollution, causes and effects. The group also discussed about the pollution by convention agriculture using heavy input of chemical fertilizer and chemical pesticides.

Then the participants discussed how the pollution and forest degradation could reduce at the individual level. Proper use of natural resources and using alternate energy like solar, fuel-efficient ovens are considered.

Methods to control the soil erosion, rain water harvesting are also discussed. Effective ground cover, presence of trees to check the soil erosion during monsoon was explained to the participants. Multipurpose trees, that could be integrated in the home garden and surrounding area were discussed with the women participants.

Possibilities to raise fund/loan from self help groups or with the co-operative societies, banks to grow the trees are also considered.

Opinion of Participants:

Akkamma Channayya said *"The workshop has exposed us to various threats to the forest and its vast use both direct and indirect. We will try our level best to conserve the forest and to reduce the pollution"*.

Nazima Bhanu Hosalli *"More workshops of this kind will be useful and has to be organized in different places"*.

Figure 2: School children participating in a training camp.



4. 0.Volunteers training workshop: Venue: Vanalli

Date: 12,13 June 2004

A two-day workshop was held for volunteers in Vanalli. Youth from Vanalli and Kodnagadde Gram Panchayat area attended the meeting.

Dr. S.G Hegde Vanalli inaugurated the workshop and said that such camps are very important as it gives exposure on various environmental issues and requested the participants to make full use of the camp. Mr. Dattatraya Vaidya President of Vanalli Gram Panchayat addressed the camp and said that there were several opportunities to Prakruti to conduct camps elsewhere. However, because of his request Prakruti team agreed to organize this camp in rural area like Vanalli, located in a very remote area with dense forest cover.

Following subjects were discussed in the workshop.

1. Bio-Diversity: importance, different levels of study, threat, why conservation is necessary. Conservation efforts in global and local level.
2. Use of forest resources/ trees.
3. Problems caused by degradation of forests.
4. Causes for Forest degradation.
5. Non- Timber Forest Products: Definition, present status, study details by Prakruti, workshop details on sustainable harvesting.
6. Wild foods and uncultivated foods, meaning, use importance and problems.
7. Medicinal plants.
8. Personality development – Goal setting and self-analysis.

After the inaugural session, meaning of Bio-Diversity, Eco-system diversity, Genetic diversity and species diversity were explained. Different levels of study, number of species identified in the world were discussed. Then the current problem of bio diversity conservation, threat to the diversity because of population pressure and inadequate managing system was also discussed. The need of conservation, efforts by international organizations like IUCN, WWF, and UN to conserve the bio-diversity was discussed with the participants. The importance of Western Ghats, as one of the hotspots of diversity, threats and conservation efforts in Uttara Kannada were discussed.

The participants were divided into two groups. First group was asked to identify uses of forest, trees and other resources. The second group had the task to identify impact of forest degradation.

Group one: Use of Forest resources and trees

- *Direct benefits*

1. Medicinal plants: *Phyllanthus emblica*, *Phyllanthus niruri*, *Terminalia bellerica*, *Terminalia chebula*, *Asparagus racemosus* and many more medicinal plants were listed.
2. Domestic and household uses: Poles and Timber for construction of house, Furniture, fuel wood etc.
3. Agriculture: Baskets, Mats, and fencing and other agriculture implements.
4. Food items and spices: Cinnamon, *Myristica malabarica*, and wild pepper.
5. Jack fruits, Honey, various fruits and leafy vegetables
6. Fodder: Fodder and cattle feed in the form of grass, leaf etc.
7. Revenue / Labor opportunity: Income from selling timber, foreign exchange and labor opportunity.
8. Habitat for wild animals.
9. Handicrafts.
10. Raw materials to various industries.

Indirect benefits:

1. Release of Oxygen, intake of Carbon dioxide, thus reducing the pollution.
2. Control of Rain.
3. Control of soil erosion and retaining of fertility.
4. Ground water recharge.
5. Avoids silting in the dams and in down stream area.
6. Maintain climatic balance.

Group two: Impact of forest degradation

- a. Soil erosion and silting: due to forest degradation soil erosion increases. This would cause silting in the down streams and dams.

- b. Impact on social, economical aspects on human beings: scarcity of fuel wood, fodder, nutritious food, and degradation of soil fertility may have adverse impact on human beings
- c. Environmental imbalance: fall in ground water level, change in ecosystems and its complex relations, loss of habitat for wild animals and desertification.
- d. Depletion of ozone layer, increase in air and water pollution.
- e. Loss of bio-diversity.

Then the participants identified causes for forest degradation, which are listed below.

1. Population pressure: Use of Forest area for agriculture expansion and for housing. Increased demand on forest resources has created pressure on these products.
2. Industrialization: Harvesting of forest resources in unsustainable method and over use of raw material for the industries from the forest.
3. Urban expansion.
4. Development activities like construction of Dams, Rail line and Roads.
5. Natural hazards – flooding, land slides.
6. Disregard or in discipline in Forest Department especially to halt illegal cutting of trees.
7. Mining of manganese, sand and stones.

Personality Development:

In the evening Mr. Vinayak Bhat gave training on Personality development.

Meaning of PERSON, self-analysis, goal setting, positive thinking in life were explained to youth. He has adopted various techniques like playing games, brain storming and group discussions in the training session.

June 13, 2004: Second Day

On the second day, the work of Prakruti on NTFP was explained in detail. It included the area/region of work, the problem, methods of work like conducting study, organizing workshops on sustainable harvesting, need of sustainable harvesting of the resource and threats to various species are also explained.

The importance of wild foods and uncultivated foods was discussed. These wild foods are foods collected from the forest or from the farms without cultivating. These foods are

important, as they are nutritious, fresh and free from pesticides. However, there is loss of knowledge as well as loss of the species. List of about 100 plant species and 15 wild animal species were given to the participants and explanation was provided for the important species.

Then the first group was asked to list important NTFPs, use, threat and how as a youth they can contribute to conserve the resource.

Second group was asked to find out the reasons for shrinking knowledge on wild foods and for the depletion of the resource/species itself.

Each group presented and discussed and finally stated how they could participate in the conservation efforts.

Details of presentation by first group:

1. List of important NTFPs- commercial, medicinal and used for domestic or house hold needs. Participants have listed 37 NTFP species and their use in brief.
2. Causes for depletion of the resources: Greed, over use, negligence of forest and other concerned authorities to check over harvesting.
3. Conservation through propagation and awareness: Requesting Forest Department to take strict action against over harvesting. Proper management and use of the resources.

Details of presentation by second group:

A. Reasons for loss of knowledge on the wild food resources:

- i. Disregard and the knowledge has not been transferred from older to younger generation.
- ii. People are not aware of danger of pesticides in the vegetables available in the market. There is no awareness on nutrition value of wild food.
- iii. Shrinking forest cover and the decrease in availability of the resource is another major reason for the loss of knowledge.

B. Reasons for depletion of the resource/species itself.

- i. Degradation of forest.
- ii. Over utilization of certain species may be the causes for depletion of the resource.

C. How to reduce loss of knowledge and resource depletion?

Awareness among youth on importance of wild foods and explaining threat to the resources, organizing competition and field demonstrations may help reduce loss of knowledge.

Cultivating wild food species in home garden and in agriculture land is another way to conserve wild foods.

To take action that would reduce degradation of forest.

In the afternoon Dr. S.G. Hegde Vanalli took the participants to the forest and Sri Ananth Hegde Keregadde a youth from a traditional Herbal Medicine family joined as resource person. They explained use of medicinal and wild food species, identifying the medicinal plants, wild food and NTFP species. The youth have identified and listed 53 medicinal, NTFP and wild food species in two and half-hours time.

Discussion about conservation of forest:

1. Use of alternate energy resources: Installation of bio-gas plants, solar energy and fuel-efficient ovens.
2. Stop building of big dams in the forest which would cause deforestation,
3. Avoid mining activity in forest area.
4. Fire protection in forest.
5. Controlling pollution caused by industries and vehicles.
6. Control urbanization and agriculture expansion through encroachment in the forest. Proper development schemes to increase agriculture production.
7. Logging without damaging the forest ecology.
8. Propagation of plants species- nursery and cultivating.

In the end Dr. S.G Hegde Vanalli addressed the participants and explained importance of medicinal plants and why conservation is necessary. He requested the participant's to practice at least few things to conserve our natural forest, to reduce pressure on forests and motivate other youth to join this group in future. Another chief guest of the function Mr. Dattatraya Vaidya President of Vanalli Gram Panchayat said that the organizers will be more happy when the participants practice at least few ideas of what they have been trained and discussed in the camp. He requested the workshop participants to make a group of them and participate/help to local community in conserving the environment.

Some participants said that as a follow up of this training camp they would like to grow some the important species in their farm and participate in conservation activities in future.

Opinion of the participants:

Rajeev Hegde, Mavinjaddi " *We learnt about bio-diversity and related aspects, NTFP, wild foods and medicinal plants. Even though we knew all these subjects we never understood its importance. We need at least three or four such camps each year. It is necessary to involve other youth in the surrounding regions*".

Mahima Vaidya " *We really enjoyed the training, subjects related to environment and personality development were good. Two days are not enough for this kind of training workshop. At least four days are required. We appreciate the entire program*".

Mahalaxmi Bhat" *We learnt about various aspects on NTFP, Wild Foods and medicinal plants. Even though we are living near the forest we did not have the opportunity to identify the medicinal plants and their use. The camp has opened up interest in this direction*".

5. 0. Training workshops for volunteers, Sirsi

Venue: M.E.S Arts and Science College Campus, Sirsi.

A one-day training workshop was held for volunteers on 6th October 2004. Workshop started after an inaugural song by the participants. Mr. Dayanand Bhat Principal M. M. Arts and Science College explained the objective of the workshop and Mr. Rajendra welcomed the participants and introduced resource persons.

Mr. Narasimha Hegde of Prakruti described the outline and themes adopted in the training workshop. Dr. R. Vasudeva Assistant Professor, College of Forestry Sirsi gave lecture on Bio-diversity and conservation. He explained the meaning of bio-diversity different levels of study and about species diversity, genetic diversity and ecosystem diversity. He said that we do not know exactly even today that how many species are there in the world. However, 1.8 million species are known and it is estimated that 13.6 million species are still unknown.

Distribution of bio-diversity: The bio-diversity is not uniformly distributed around the world and tropics are richest in terms of diversity. Tropical rain forests are major locations of bio-diversity. Twenty-five hot spots are identified sixteen of them are in the tropics. In India Western Ghats and Eastern Himalayas are identified as hot spots. Wealth of diversity in India is very rich as it contributes 5% of world's diversity where it has 2% of land area. 45,000 plant species and 81,000 animal species are identified in the country. In India 50% of the forest cover has been lost, 70 % of the water bodies are polluted, coastlines and grasslands are getting degraded. Nearly 10% of the plants are under threat and 200 species are in endangered category.

Causes for the loss of Biodiversity: Habitat fragmentation: For example Elephant habitat has been reduced by 10% in south India and 30% in West Bengal. Encroachment of wetlands, and isolated *Kan* forests (in Uttara Kannada District) which was the life line for several economically important species. Introduction of alien or exotic species and over exploitation of plant and animal species are also major causes for the loss of biodiversity. Illegal poaching mechanized fishing, export and trade of animal parts and plants products has increased the rate of loss of biodiversity. Pollution: Accumulation of Pesticides through the process of bio-magnification for example cases of *Saurus cranes* Bharatpur,

White backed and Bengal Vulture, honey bees in Western Ghats and Osprey a bird of pray.

Unplanned development projects: Dr. Vasudeva gave example of various large dams across rivers, mining activity, how the coral reefs were dredged for use as raw material in cement manufacturing in Gujarat.

Conservation:

Traditional approaches for conservation like protection of sacred groves. Formal approaches of *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation.

After the guest lecture the participants discussed more about causes for biodiversity loss and how as a student they could involve in the conservation process. They also discussed about the present population pressure and its impact on diversity.

In the afternoon Dr. V. N. Nayak Assistant Professor Department of Marine Biology Karnataka University Post Graduation, explained about river ecosystem, riverine forest, mangroves and about importance of wetland. He described how the river and marine ecosystem would contribute to the local community providing food and cash. The ecological functions of mangroves and current threat to the because of unplanned development activities, prawn culture and other things. Dr Nayak illustrated the definition of wetlands and classification of wetlands and the need to conserve it from encroachment and from pollution. He showed several slides on river ecosystem, their functions, and wetland and on mangroves.

Then the participants had a discussion on establishing nurseries on mangrove species and about the cultivation. The different stages of river from its origin to the end where it joins the ocean and its importance were also explained. The needs of environment education to youth, moral ethics, responsibility of younger generation in conservation of nature are also explained. During the discussion Dr. V. N. Nayak gave information about mono culture and poly culture, disadvantages of mono culture plantations, about patenting, Coastal Regulatory Zone (CRZ- a zone to protect coastal area through banning certain activities in the speculated area) and about Mangrove Action Plan (MAP).

6:0. Training Youth (College students) on environmental issues.

Themes:

6.1. Major functions performed by forest ecosystem:

Purification of soil and water regulation of water flow.

Detoxification and decomposition of wastes.

Generation and renewal of soil and soil fertility.

Pollination of crops and natural vegetation and Control of agriculture pests.

Dispersal of seeds and translocation of nutrients.

Maintain biodiversity.

Partial climatic stabilization, Moderation of temperature extremes and Windbreaks.

Support for diverse human culture.

Aesthetic beauty and landscape enrichment.

Source: Daily 1997, as in Tropical Forests Update Volume 14, 2004.

Then social, economic and cultural functions of forests are also discussed.

The students were divided in to six groups. They were asked to discuss and present causes for degradation of forest, impact of forest degradation and How to reduce/halt forest degradation?

6.2. Non Timber Forest Products:

The uses of NTFPs are as old as human existence. In subsistence and rural economics the role and contributions of NTFPs are crucial because of their richness of variety, as sources of food, fodder, fiber, fertilizers, herbal portions, construction materials and herbal products. Benefit of harvesting the timber goes to contractors and Government where as benefit from harvesting the NTFP would contribute to the economy of the rural communities. Harvesting of NTFP is less destructive than harvesting the timber by logging. Therefore the NTFPs are gaining importance globally.

In Uttara Kannada district Prakruti has listed more than 350 NTFPs, which are being used for domestic, medicinal and for commercial purpose. However, due to over exploitation the resources are getting depleted, *Vateria indica*, *Garcinia gummigatta* and *Myristica malabarica* are few to name. Conservation efforts of various institutions and local communities were explained to the students.

6.3. Wild Foods:

Since most of the students are ladies, importance of wild foods, loss of knowledge on species and loss of the resources were explained.

Problems in Uttara Kannada to conserve the natural forests, conservation efforts through local community and various institutions and organizations involved are also discussed and the impact also has been discussed.

6.4. Land, Land Use Planning, Sustainable Land Management.

Definition of Land, Land resources and Land Use. Functions of Land like production function, the biotic environmental function, the climate regulative function, the hydrologic function, the storage function, the waste and pollution control function, the living space function were explained to the students. Problem in agriculture and the downward spiral to poverty trap due to increase in population, nutrient removals, soil degradation and falling yields. The farmers are committing suicide because of crop failure. Heavy use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers for a long period, irrigation through the construction of big dams which ultimately involves heavy investment to government and tax to the farmers are other reasons for crop failure. The diversity in crops, mixed or multi cropping system is also replaced by mono cropping due to commercialization. Failure of crops or collapse of price would lead to such problems. Thus an integrated approach of land use planning is the need of the day.

6.5. Field work:

The students were taken to Muregar village. They walked in the natural forests and importance of various species was demonstrated. Several medicinal plants and NTFPs were also identified. Ganapati Hegde briefed about the functioning of Village Forest Committees and how they are trying to conserve the natural resources through this committee. The students were divided in to four groups. First and third group collected data on different forest species used by the community visiting individual households. They also tried to identify the list of species that have become rare or under threat. Second and fourth group collected data on cropping pattern and farming practices (Pl, see the attached relieve sheets in annex).

6.6. Post Fieldwork:

After the collection of data and information the data were analyzed and reporting is was done. The each group presented their findings in brief and later on it was discussed in detail. Possibilities of involving in conservation efforts through planting some of these rare species and educating/creating awareness to others are also discussed.

The compilation of the report is published in the college in front of several other students and staff and the best three reports are awarded.

7.0. Volunteer training Vanalli

Two-day volunteer training camp was organised in Vanalli on May 7th and 8, 2005.

In the first session Mr. M.R. Hegde president of Snehakunja organization and president of District Federation of Village Forest Committees explained about Joint Forest Planning and Management (JFPM) how and when the scheme started and about its objectives. He said that the scheme started during 1990s and at the first stage the participation of the local people was very less. Later on due to the pressure from voluntary organizations the Forest Department had to involve local community and Village Forest Committees (VFCs) were formed in this connection. In Uttara Kannada district now there are more than 300 VFCs.

Mr. M.R Hegde discussed about the Forest Development Agency (FDA), goals and objectives of the scheme, role of VFCs in implementing this scheme.

The participants were divided in to three groups and following issues were discussed in detail.

Goals, objectives and functioning of JFPM and role of VFCs. The degree of participation of local communities, poor and socially backward communities in the project were also discussed. Implementation of the new FDA scheme objectives, involvement of local people and VFCs were discussed. Participants discussed about pros and cons of the scheme and what could be done to involve local communities for the better management of the natural resources. Each group presented the out come of the group discussions and M.R. Hegde and Narasimha Hegde clarified the doubts.

In the afternoon Mr. Sridhar Desai famous herbal medicine person gave lecture on medicinal plant. He explained about use of herbal medicine and plants in the historical period, classification of plants according to Ayurveda system, present status and threats

to the resources. He suggested the medicinal plants that can be cultivated in the home garden for the treatment of common diseases. Detailed uses of important medicinal plants like *Ocimum sanctum*, people's tree, *Alstonia spp*, *Sambar soppu*, *Centella asiatica*, *Apattina mara*, Chakrani and other trees. Mr. Desai also gave a list of endangered medicinal plants like Maale bindu, *Saraca indica*, *Esculenta eucifera* and *Terminalia arjuna*.

Then he took the participants to the forest region and gave demonstrations about medicinal plants for two hours. Participants discussed with him about medicinal uses of several plants and method of cultivation.

On the second day Mr. Pandurang Hegde, Director of Programs, Prakruti explained the importance of forests in the Western Ghats and how the forest resource has been depleting since independence. Dependence of forest dwelling communities on the forest resources and how the livelihood of the people has affected due to forest degradation. He said Uttara Kannada district, which had 82% of natural forest cover, has now only 10% of natural forest according to study of satellite images. Forest based industries like Paper industries, Plywood factories, use of valuable timbers for railway sleepers, mining, construction of huge dams across rivers and unplanned development activities have caused destruction of forests.

The participants were divided into two groups and discussed about the benefit and problems of these development activities. The group also discussed how to conserve the forest and how to achieve development with less impact on environmental impact?

Participants opined that there are certain benefits from the development activities. On the other hand Uttara Kannada known as forest district is losing such name as the forest degradation is enormous. It has adverse effects on the agriculture and on local communities. Conservation and development of forest resources could be the best alternate for development scenario. Empowering the local community and organising the people to halt forest degradation due to unplanned development activities and proper natural resources management can help reduce threats to the forest.

In the afternoon V.G. Ajjibal and Rajendra Sirsimakki took class on Personality development.

Opinion of Participants:

Mangala Subray Hulekal a collage girl studying her B.A.I degree said “ *I attended the workshop for a change and my classmates forced me to join this. Now I feel that i lost a good opportunity without attending previous year training class*”

Suma Hegde another participant said “ we got information about VFC, JFPM and FDA, it was a pleasure to have Mr. Shridhar Desai who gave memorable lecture and field demonstration on medicinal plants”.

Ramesh Hegde President of Shri Mahaganapati Youth Club, Gonsar and a member of Village Panchayat said “ *We have participated in the two training workshops last year and now. We request ‘Prakruti’ to organise such camps in future years also. However, before attending next year workshop we the participants have to adopt certain lessons in our life that we learnt in the workshop.*”

8.0: ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS CAMP AT YEDALLI

“PRAKRITI” has conducted an Environmental Awareness Camp at Yedalli on 21st and 22nd of May 2005. The report of the camp is as follows:

The camp was inaugurated on 21st May 2005 at 10.30 a.m. by Smt. Kamalakshi N Hegde a well known practitioner of Herbal Medicine of this area. The function was presided by Smt. Poornima Hegde member of Yedalli Gram Panchayat. Inaugurating the camp Smt. Kamalakshi Hegde expressed her views that every individual has the original feelings of attachment like my house, my father, my mother, my sister, and my brother. Each individual should have the same kind of love for his surrounding environment also. Moreover he should be prepared to protect it from any kind of assault. With these wishes she greeted that the camp can be a success to bring awareness among the people. In the presidential speech Smt. Poornima Hegde opined that even though there is no thick forest in the surrounding, people should not think of growing *Acasia auriculiformis* which is harmful to the environment. On the other hand people should think of growing traditional plants and trees and also to nourish and protect them from any kind of assault.

The first session was engaged by Smt. Kamalakshi N Hegde regarding Herbal Medicine and it was continued by Sri. Vigneshwar Hegde Abrimane. They explained about different types of medicines and use of herbs in Herbal medicine. In our everyday life we experience different types of health hazards like cold, flu, fever, diarrhea, skin disease, asthma and joint pain. Instead of allopathic medicines these hazards can be cured successfully using herbal medicine. She also felt that the collection of these medicines begins from kitchen spice box and extends to garden and then to the forest. But the knowledge about the appropriate use of these medicines is equally essential.

The Second session was conducted by Sri. N. R. Hegde regarding awareness of use of Herbs and Environmental Protection. Engaging this session, Sri. N. R. Hegde formed two groups among the participants to make room for them to discuss certain aspects like historical background of herbs, methods of identification, threats for their survival, different impacts caused by the loss of these and how far the prevention of these plants is essential.

As a result of this discussion from the two groups following outcome is analysed.

HISTORY

In the past, medicine practice was not much advanced

Numbers of diseases were also less.

It was common to use some herbs as a remedy for wounds.

With the natural curiosity the gradual use of herbs as medicine.

Medicinal practice passed on to several generations as a gift of heredity.

IDENTIFICATION

Herbs identified by our ancestors.

Identification of herbs with the help of experience.

Identifying the herbs and knowing the features of the diseases.

THE SURVIVAL PROBLEMS OF HERBAL MEDICINES.

Deforestation

Lack of knowledge.

Wild fire.

As food for animals.

Negligence of man to protect them.

Use of Allopathic Medicines as an alternative to herbs.

PRESENT CONDITIONS

New type of diseases

Side - effects caused by modern medicines.

The dearth (scarcity) of certain medicinal plants.

The lack of conventional medicinal practitioners.

Lack of knowledge in identification of new herbs.

Less number of people show interest in making new researches in this field.

SOLUTIONS FOR THE PRESENT PROBLEMS

To go back to the use of herbal medicines.

Protection of medicinal plants.

To make a scientific study of the medicinal quality of these herbs.

To bring awareness among the people.

Making them to know about the different side effects of modern medicines.

SOLUTIONS BY WHOM

By Public participation.

By N.G.O's.

By Government.

Mass Media.

These two groups have presented the outcome of this discussion. Sri. N. R. Hegde spoke on the objectives of this camp giving some more additional guidance.

The third session of the day was commenced after the lunch at 2.00 p.m. by Prof. V. G. Hegde. There were discussions regarding Mutual Dependence between man and environment. Environment is the significant force behind the growth of the present civilisation. Man learnt all the social values and behaviors observing environment only. For example as a crow invites all its friends and family when it finds food, as a cook keenly observes the times, fidelity of dog and persistent effort of spider. In many ways environment makes its influence in the intellectual growth of human being. As the flow of a river human life is full of twists and turns, and also ups and downs. In this way human life cannot exist without environment. For our survival environment is essential and also we have to use the wealth of nature in a very limited way.

The quiz programme was conducted by Sri. M. R. Hegde Neernalli in the fourth session. The quiz was more interesting because it was more relevant on environment of North Kanara. The quiz competition was arranged with six rounds of questions, and in each round eight questions were asked on topics like Geographical, Cultural, Educational, Economical and also the Biodiversity of Uttara Kannada Dist. Sharat Bhat got the first prize and second prize was received by Ravi Hegde and the third prize was bagged by Vinay Hegde.

The last session of the day was conducted by Sri. Pandurang Hegde. He conducted group discussions about the development of industries and development of North Kanara. He focused on Eco-friendly Industries. In his speech he spoke about different types of environmental pollution and also the methods of preventing them.

Two groups are made among the participants and the first group is entrusted to discuss reasons for environmental pollution and its impacts. The second group was assigned the subject about the different methods to be employed to prevent environmental pollution and who has to do it. The following observations have been enlisted.

Ist GROUP

REASONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

- Overpopulation
- Urbanisation.
- Lack of knowledge
- Misuse of environment by man.
- Industrialisation
- Extinction of wild animals.
- Extension of agricultural lands.
- Illegal way of earning money.
- Business commodity.

THE DIFFERENT IMPACTS

- Deforestation
- Decrease in the underground water level.
- Insecured life.
- Increase of diseases.
- Loss of ozone layer.
- Soil fertility loss.
- Deficit of rain.

All the points were discussed with suitable illustrations.

II nd GROUP

MEASURES TO PREVENT ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

- Population control.
- Use of vehicles, which do not cause air and sound pollution.
- Stopping the use of fertilizers.
- Acknowledging the people about the importance of environment.
- The use of solar energy.
- Organic manure.
- Avoiding the use of plastic.

- Proper management of waste materials.
- Prevention of illegal industrialisation.
- Stopping the forest lease system.
- Not to undertake major irrigation projects.
- Reprocessing of waste materials.
- The use of alternative fuel.

REMEDY IS EXPECTED FROM:

- Government.
- Local organisations.
- Voluntary organisations.
- Community.
- Mass Media.
- Educational Institutions.
- Religious and Community leaders.

With the remarks of Sri. Pandurang Hegde on these points, the session came to an end. The second day of the camp was started with the review session, which was conducted by Sri. G. R. Hegde. All the trainees shared their experience of the previous day.

The next session started at 10.30 by Sri. G. S. Hegde Lakkisaval about identification of herbs and trees. This session was more interesting because the trainees acquired both theoretical and practical knowledge. As an experiment this camp was arranged in the forest region. More than 100 different types of plants and trees are introduced to them along with their English names and botanical names. They are conveyed about the different uses of their varieties.

After the lunch the last session was about personality development. Sri. V. G. Hegde started the session about Positive Thinking and the session was ended with Confidence Building by Sri. V. M. Bhat. A discussion was held on certain topics like the meaning of personality, positive thinking, negative thinking and methods of cultivating positive thinking and its different benefits. Next session is engaged by Sri. V. M. Bhat who spoke about the role of self-confidence, its importance in anybody's life, the consequences of lack of self-confidence and also about the problems caused by over confidence. He ended his talk explaining about "WATCH".

- W - Watch your Words.
A - Watch your Action.
T - Watch your Thoughts.
C - Watch your Character.
H - Watch your Health & Hobbies.

The closing function started at 4.30 p.m. Sri. G. R. Hegde, Director of Yedalli Co-op Bank presided over the function. Sri. V. G. Hegde, Sri. Vasant Bhat and Sri. V. M. Bhat was the guests of this function. The trainees shared their experience of the camp.

Opinion of Participants:

One of the participants of the camp Mr. Sharat Bhat said, *"The camp imparted a new experience. We spend our vacations in playing games and visiting relatives. But this camp helped us to know about our surroundings. It exposed us to the ways of damaging our own environment how are responsible for making harm to our environment in one or the other way. We realised that we have to be careful in this regard"*.

Mr. Vivek opined that *"they have been much benefited by this camp in which they have been taken to the forest and were informed about the different types of medicinal plants and trees and their uses. Further he told on behalf of the participants that now they are determined to protect the environment and they expected the guidance from their elders time to time"*.

Lastly prizes were distributed for the winners of quiz competition and identification of plants competition.

9.0: ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS CAMP AT AJJIBAL

"PRAKRITI" has conducted an Environmental Awareness Camp at Ajjibal on 27th and 28th of May 2005. The report of the camp is as follows:

The camp was inaugurated on 27th May 2005 at 10.45 a.m. by Sri. Venka Beera Naik one who is well known practitioner of Herbal Medicine of this area. The function was presided by Sri. S. R. Hegde Balgar, who is also a well known practitioner of Herbal Medicine of this area.

Shri. Venka Beera Naik in his inaugural speech told that now a day's people are attracted towards allopathic medicines, but they suffer from different types of side effects. Moreover herbal medicines will not make their immediate impact on those who are addicted to Allopathic medicines. Therefore people should have the patience to take the benefit of herbs and save themselves from different side effects. Presiding over the function Sri. S. R. Hegde told that if we know the use of herbs, we can stop the extinction of these plants.

Both these persons gave ample of informations about the preparation of herbal medicines and the use of herbs as remedy for different diseases in the very first session.

The Second session was conducted by Sri. N. R. Hegde regarding Awareness of use of Herbs, even Environmental Protection. Engaging the next session, Sri. N. R. Hegde formed two groups among the participants to make room for them to discuss certain

aspects like historical background of herbs, methods of identification, threats for their survival, different impacts caused by the loss of these and how far the prevention of these plants is essential.

As a result of this discussion from the two groups following outcome is analysed.

HISTORY

In the past, medicine practice was not much advanced

Numbers of diseases were also less.

It was common to use some herbs as a remedy for wounds.

With the natural curiosity the gradual use of herbs as medicine.

Medicinal practice passed on to several generations as a gift of heredity.

IDENTIFICATION

Herbs identified by our ancestors.

Identification of herbs with the help of experience.

Identifying the herbs and knowing the features of the diseases.

THE SURVIVAL PROBLEMS OF HERBAL MEDICINES.

Deforestation

Lack of knowledge.

Wild fire.

As food for animals.

Negligence of man to protect them.

Use of Allopathic Medicines as an alternative to herbs.

PRESENT CONDITIONS

New type of diseases

Side - effects caused by modern medicines.

The dearth (scarcity) of certain medicinal plants.

The lack of conventional medicinal practitioners.

Lack of knowledge in identification of new herbs.

Less number of people show interest in making new researches in this field.

SOLUTIONS FOR THE PRESENT PROBLEMS

To go back to the use of herbal medicines.

Protection of medicinal plants.

To make a scientific study of the medicinal quality of these herbs.

To bring awareness among the people.

Making them to know about the different side effects of modern medicines.

SOLUTIONS BY WHOM

By public participation.

By N.G.O's.

By Government.

Mass Medias.

The outcome of this discussion has been presented by the leaders of these two groups. Sri. N. R. Hegde spoke on the objectives of this camp giving some more additional guidance.

The third session of the day was commenced after the lunch at 2.00 p.m. by Prof. V. G. Hegde. There were discussions regarding Mutual Dependence between man and environment.

Then the quiz programme was conducted by Prof. V. G. Hegde in the fourth session. The quiz was more interesting because it was more relevant on environment of North Kanara. The quiz competition was arranged with six rounds of questions, and in each round eight questions were asked on topics like Geographical, Cultural, Educational, Economical and also the Biodiversity of Uttara Kannada Dist. Kamalakar Harijan got the first prize and second prize was received by Arun Naik and the third prize was bagged by Pratiba Gouda.

The second day of the camp was started with the review session which was conducted by Sri. Shridhar N Naik. All the trainees shared their experience of the previous day.

The next session started at 10.30 by Sri. G. S. Hegde Lakkisaval, about the identification of herbs and trees. This session was more interesting because both theoretical and practical knowledge was acquired by the trainees. As an experiment this camp was arranged in the forest region. More than 100 different types of plants and trees are introduced to them along with their English names and botanical names. They are conveyed about the different uses of their varieties.

In this competition all the participants have been involved. Miss Prathiba Gouda identified 70 varieties of plants out of 76, to win the first prize. Manjesh Shet and Raghav Naik received second and third prize respectively.

After the lunch the last session was about personality development. Sri. V. G. Hegde started the session about Positive Thinking and the session was ended with Confidence Building by Sri. V. M. Bhat. A discussion was held on certain topics like the meaning of personality, positive thinking, negative thinking and methods of cultivating positive thinking and its different benefits. Next session is engaged by Sri. V. M. Bhat who spoke about the role of self-confidence, its importance in anybody's life, the consequences of lack of self-confidence and also about the problems caused by over confidence. He ended his talk explaining about "WATCH".

The last session of this two days camp is engaged by noted environmental activist Sri. Pandurang Hegde. In his speech he spoke about different types of environmental pollution and also the methods of preventing them.

Two groups are made among the participants and the first group is entrusted to discuss reasons for environmental pollution and its impacts. The second group was assigned the subject about the different methods to be employed to prevent environmental pollution and who has to do it. The following observations have been enlisted.

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- Not to undertake major irrigation projects.
- Reprocessing of waste materials.
- The use of alternative fuel.

REMEDY IS EXPECTED FROM:

- Government.
- Local organisations.
- Voluntary organisations.
- Public involvement.
- Mass Medias.
- Educational media.
- Religious leaders.
- With the remarks of Sri. Pandurang Hegde on these points, the session came to an end.

- Valedictory function was arranged at 6.00 O'clock in the evening. The closing function was started at 6.00 p.m. Sri. Venka Beera Naik presided over the function. Sri. V. G. Hegde, Sri. Shridhar Naik, Sri. Ramachandra Naik and Sri. Pandurang Hegde was the guest of this function. While expressing the impressions one of the participants Smt. Chetana Madival admitted that unknowingly she has also contributed to the environment pollution but now onwards she has decided to be careful about it. Another participant Kamalakar Harijan expressed his feeling that so far they have done many errors due to lack of awareness but they have decided to work together to protect the environment.

In this two days camp, 28 participants were participated including 16 girls.

10.0. Impact:

1. Through these camps we were able to create awareness on importance of forests in Western Ghats and various threats to the natural forest.
2. The participants from the training camp in Dandeli joined the *Kali Bachao Andolan* to conserve the Kali River. They are the youth taking responsibility of second line leadership to conserve the Kali River from pollution.
3. The youth group has shown keen interest to become volunteers in conservation efforts.
4. Participants of Vanalli training workshop participated in the movement against unscientific method of logging in Gonsar (Mr. Ramesh and Ganesh). Four youth (Mr. Rajeev, Mr. Harsha, Mr. Ramesh and Mr. Akshay) involved in our efforts to conserve the Cinnamon leaves from unscientific harvesting of leaves from the contractors. They were in the group that halted harvesting of Cinnamon leaves in Mensi and Gonsar and participated in the workshop on sustainable harvesting of Cinnamon leaves.