

## **Successful Case Studies of Conservation and Eco-tourism highlighted at the Environment Congress**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Odisha environment Congress celebrating the International Year of the Forest being organized by the Human Development Foundation in association with the Center for Environment and Development (CED) and Regional Museum of Natural History (RMNH) continued on its 2<sup>nd</sup> day with Sri P. N. Padhi, PCCF addressing the broad scenario of forest resources in Odisha from the perspective of the forest policy environment. The day consisted of 4 technical sessions. Following the special address, the two morning sessions were on the topic of 'Forest Dependency and Resource Utilisation' and 'Traditional Knowledge in Forestry' in which interesting case studies in Eco-tourism projects was presented by both Government and non-government participants. In particular the conservation efforts in Bhitarkanika, the eco-tourism pilot project near Satkosia and conservation of birds in Chilka by 'Wild Odisha' were much appreciated. Dr. Padmaja Mishra of Utkal University presented proposal for assessment of forest resources using appropriate economic models for better policy planning. One of the highlight of the deliberations was the medium of language being Odiya while powerpoints were in English.

In the afternoon sessions, the Cross-cutting issues in Forestry were addressed by speakers from academia and non-government organizations. The final session of the day was dedicated to presentations by young scientists. The young Scientist award will be presented to the winner on the last day tomorrow.

Earlier yesterday, Odisha Environment Congress (OEC)-2011 was inaugurated on 22, Dec 2011 with Hon'ble Minister of Forest and Environment, Government of Odisha, Sri. Debiprasad Mishra inaugurating the event. The Minister lighted the lamp along with Dr. P J Dilip Kumar, IFS, DG Forest, Government of India, Sri Raj Kumar Sharma IAS, Commissioner cum Secretary, Forests and Environment Department, Sri Vinod Kumar, IFS, PCCF and Project Director, OFSDP, and Sri P N Padhi, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest Odisha and Sri. Sudarsan Das, Secretary OEC, Organising Committee. The Minister released the proceedings of OEC-2011 and presented it to Dr.

Babu Ambat, Director, Centre for Environment and Development. He appreciated the successful efforts of JAICA in promoting livelihood and conserve forest through 2300 JFM committees. He added that the state is planning to cover all JFMs under the similar programs in future. The inaugural session was ended by a short Odiya film “Tumari Othore Hasatie”. Mr. Sudarsan Das welcomed the participants at the beginning. The meeting was ended with a formal vote of thanks by Sri Vinod Kumar, IFS and PD, OFSDP. The event was conducted at Jaydev Bhavan, followed by photo exhibition and technical paper presentation by researchers, forest officials and civil society members at Regional Museum of Natural History, Bhubaneswar. Around 500 experts, academicians, VSS members and forest officials from all districts, students, volunteers and print and electronic media. The experts and panelists from different field presented the paper followed by a discussion in which many participants raised several questions.

OEC, 2011 is sponsored by Forest and Environment Department, Government of Odisha and the three days programme is organized by Odisha Forest Sector Development Project (OFSDP), Government of Odisha.



