A photograph of a group of children and an elderly woman in a lush, green forest. They are gathered around a branch with small green leaves and red berries. One child in a light blue shirt is pointing at the branch. The woman, with white hair, is looking on. The background shows dense foliage and a hillside.

Seventeenth
Annual Report
2010 - 2011

Keystone Foundation
The Blue Mountains



Annual Report 2010 - 2011



Foreword

Keystone – A Group for Eco-development Initiatives, has often been referred to as the Honey Bee People. Quite rightly so. We came here 17 years ago in search of bees and honey gatherers & beekeepers in the forests of Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve. Tribals or Indigenous People and their lives, livelihoods combined with Biodiversity and Conservation have been our passion and remain our focus in all our activities.

But like bees, we are going through a period of stress. Lack of food, forage, nesting sites, erratic rains and local climate change reduce bee population thereby affecting pollination of agricultural and forest crops. Bees, birds and various insects in nature are forest-gardeners, without them Life would be sterile and dead. We since the past year have been going through a lean period due to lack of funding opportunities and a significant number of proposals being unsuccessful. Funding agencies that have been supporting us for a long time such as Ford Foundation, have reduced their budgets and changed focus from mountain biodiversity areas to dry lands of India. In terms of numbers, from April 2009 - March 2010, our annual budget turnover was INR 2.5 crores and this financial year April 2010 - Mar 2011, it is INR 1.85 crores.

With this new stress and change in environment, we have also made some changes and taken some bold decisions:

Like bees, we have swarmed locally – instead of one Keystone Foundation – the trust with all its activities and dimensions – we have formed two other institutions:

- Nilgiri Natural History Society (NNHS)
- Last Forest Enterprises Private Limited(LFE)

To take stock of our 15 years of existence in the Nilgiris since Feb 1995, an Impact Assessment Study was done by professional consultants on the qualitative and quantitative aspects which are significant in the eyes of all our stakeholders. They included tribals, local people, businesses, Government, Academia, and lay persons who had little knowledge about us.

There are a couple of fresh things that have happened apart from the important learning from the past and its consequences on the future. Since this Annual Report, the reporting will have a financial year format (from April to March), hence this time it covers the period January 2010 to March 2011. Moving away from the Calendar year of January to December is

relevant as it did not coincide then with the financial year.

The Annual Report brings a lot of details, insights, lessons and experiences as varied from seed pollination trials with village farmers to accreditation by Credibility Alliance. There are stories of Conservation Education and children who paint the sky and live in the forests; or Culture & People's focus on nutritional supplements through the *Seemai Sudhi* newspaper.

In terms of Networks and Exchanges, Save Western Ghats Meeting was a high point, with Shri Jairam Ramesh, Union Minister for Environment & Forests, Government of India keeping his promise to be with us at Kotagiri and then spending time to listen, see Keystone and interact with a number of environmentalists on what ails Western Ghats and what needs to be done.

The Non Timber Forest Produce Exchange Programme has been through ups and downs, like the bees in transition – sometimes absconding due to disturbance and sometimes swarming with a good flow. They have innovatively formed 3 desks - "Honey, Advocacy & Fibre" – with each organization providing its focus and expertise on bringing out the best in each sector. Advocacy through Environmental Governance is picking up with speed, some successes in Forest Rights Act (FRA) process and applications for indigenous people and some lessons to be learnt.

In conclusion, the past 15 months record is realistic. Turnovers lowered yet not many staff left; the Last Forest Enterprises (LFE) Private Limited evolved out of the Organic Market Development to give it a spur, growth and possibly the engine for the future. 14 staff resigned from Keystone Foundation and joined LFE. Energy and new initiatives continue to bubble and new springs and streams of ideas and action get formed. Like the season and flowering, times change and ecology provides a new opportunity for learning, application to craft a new hive of activities that go to enhance the local lives and biodiversity.

As we go to the printers in June 2011, new vistas and interesting alliances and openings have come like young birds after a successful migration trip:

- Ecosystems Alliance set up by Both Ends, IUCN and Wetlands International (all from The Netherlands) is an exciting opportunity to engage and partner,
- The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund which concentrates in Western Ghats is possibly building into an interesting phase with Sacred Groves and Public policy initiatives.
- Infrastructure has brought in two new buildings – Adivasi Resource Centre and the Last Forest Enterprises.
- Academic Partnerships and senior professional fellowships with University of Hawaii through Anita Varghese's PhD on Community-based Ecological Monitoring, Sumin George Thomas's admission for Conservation Leadership in University of Cambridge and Pratim Roy's entry into Cornell for the prestigious Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship.

Life goes on with so much coming and going, like hues and colours of the forests that shed and renew themselves all over and all the time. If an organization not only becomes a hive or a bee that is busy, but becomes a part of a mountain ecosystem – that lives, reflects, muses, is confused, laughs and enjoys each month and season, goes through the valley and under the canopy and through the tea bushes and the wetlands, then stress becomes solace and difficult times become a new opportunity.

We wish to thank all our donors, friends, well wishers and we hope you would find the Annual Report interesting and be a part of our journey and foraging trail.

Pratim Roy
June 2011

Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve





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Impact Assessment 2010

ORIGINS OF THE STUDY

Keystone Foundation has completed 15 years working in the field of environment and development in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve (NBR). Keystone now has a team of 52 staff members of mixed backgrounds; it has 6 resource centers in the NBR, with the head office at Kotagiri. In the past 15 years, Keystone has commissioned three major evaluations of its work – John Kurien (1999); Janet & Bharat (2003); Patricia Shanley (2008); apart from conducting several organization building exercises and restructuring, the latest being in 2008. Having completed 15 years of work in the NBR, Keystone has now commissioned an Impact Assessment Exercise with the primary purpose of “To assess the impact of Keystone on different stakeholders groups and the social, economic, cultural, natural environment, with a view to contribute to Keystone’s future positioning and role.”

A further secondary output of the study was to identify indicators for outcomes and impact that could be used by Keystone in future evaluations and studies. A third element was to assess the quantum of financial and human resources, infrastructure and practices required for differing degrees and scale of impacts – and this is something the consultants could not do justice to, given the fact that it was difficult to establish attribution to the planned outcomes of Keystone and hence correlation to resources was not possible.

STUDY FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

The starting point of the study was “outcomes” stated in the Tree Fall Gap 2004 document – a statement

of what the organisation intended to achieve or contribute to. These statements of outcome or intended results were then translated into a set of indicators in consultation with the management group. It emerged that many of the indicators would not be “measurable” in terms of quantitative data but would lend themselves to qualitative information – and hence the team was given a quick overview of methodologies like Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Most Significant Change (MSC) and case studies. Further, a task force approach was adopted and separate teams created for collecting quantitative data and for qualitative information. The teams then worked out sample sizes and where to seek information from and in what time frame.

The consultants meanwhile agreed with the directors on a set of external stakeholders who would be contacted for their perceptions of Keystone and directions for the future. Once the data and information was brought to the table, several decisions had to be taken:

The six results had overlaps and hence it was decided to analyse them in related pairs:

- i. Restoration: Degradation of eco-systems and threatened species in NBR arrested / decelerated; and
- ii. Communities and other Stakeholders own and put into practice elements of knowledge that are generated as a result of research and/ or action projects initiated and managed by Keystone and thereby contributing to the body of accessible knowledge and becoming a centre of excellence.
- iii. Natural resource-based sustainable livelihood options increased for a larger percentage of tribal

- communities in the Nilgiri area/ NBR. (tribal/ non-tribal); and
- iv. Economic status and opportunities of indigenous people enhanced.
- v. Programmes are managed increasingly by village groups and institutions; and
- vi. Keystone and Indigenous people influence key stakeholders (decision makers, academia, research, etc.) on policy issues that affect their lives.

FINDINGS

Some of the indicators originally thought to be useful/ necessary had to be dropped or combined for want of relevance or data.

Several rounds of validation were done between the consultants and the Keystone team, before clarity emerged on the levels and quality of impact of Keystone programmes. In summary, what emerged were five major clusters of impacts:

- i. Higher prices, better quality, steadier income - livelihoods
- ii. Conservation, sustainable harvesting, organic farming practices
- iii. Value Addition, higher price realization in local markets also
- iv. Enhanced self confidence, negotiation ability
- v. Self esteem – cultural identity – can do well in their own identity

The future possibilities for Keystone emerged out of internal discussions, suggestions from external stakeholders and the consultants' own perceptions. Some ideas given by stakeholders were not supported by the consultants. Finally six "vectors of change" were identified:

- Taking to wider national and international levels, Keystone's experiences in areas like livelihoods linked to ecological conservation, organic certification - Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) and enterprise development models

- Climate change and related areas of work – impact of global warming, ecological conservation strategies and water conservation in mountainous areas; environmental services like carbon sequestration, analysis of the effect of climate change on eco-fragile areas
- Influencing/ advocating with government at district, state and national level – on rights of adivasis and related programmes – be more visible and audible
- Keystone as a national center of excellence - in terms of specifically focusing on training and capacity development of key partners and decision makers (current and potential)
- Some of the "eggs" need to hatch – spinning off components of KF and giving greater/ dominant ownership to adivasis – Production Centre Development (PCD), Organic Market Development (OMD), culture and people
- Institutional capacity development for enhanced sustainability – more focus on village institutions for sustainability and ensuring that women are an integral part of the process

A Programme Attractiveness Analysis framework has been recommended to facilitate a comparative analysis between several alternatives and to lay a rational decision model. Keystone might wish to use this framework for existing programme areas also to enable more objective decision making.

To facilitate growth with stability, three programme management strategies were also recommended for adoption by Keystone:

- The idea of having a clear exit or withdrawal strategy
- Strengthening the second level of management
- Indigenous knowledge to spread awareness on conservation across the NBR (using technology – community radio)

Full Report is available online at <http://keystone-foundation.org/download/367> assesment 2009-10



Conservation

ACTIVITIES

Conservation Education

Children learn through observation and experience & develop their capacities and intelligence through such learning. When a child paints a blue-coloured patch and explains that it is a water body, as the sky looks blue, it really is so. When another one makes hats with old newspapers, (s)he indirectly absorbs a lesson in geometry and recycling of waste material. Conservation Education is being conducted for children of various age and backgrounds. Children below the age of 16 years who are from the indigenous communities or from rural and urban backgrounds are part of the programmes. Children of each group are addressed from different communication hubs like the Bee Museum, Nature Interpretation Centers of Hasanur and Mudumalai,

Environment Education time slots in Tribal Residential Schools and Village Conservation Centers.

We are also developing a curriculum and a documentary that incorporates lessons we have learnt from the NBR.

Workshops and Meetings

- **Conservation Education Network.** An informal network started in 2008 to deliberate on experiences with conservation education. The members of the group are working in various parts of India. ATREE, Bengaluru; Nature Conservation Foundation, Mysore; Kalpavriksh, Pune; Zoo Outreach, Coimbatore; Samrakshan, Meghalaya etc. are some of the member organizations. Keystone Foundation was the host for the third

annual retreat in October 2010 which had 45 participants. Dr. Vasavi from National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), gave an interesting talk on 'Elements towards Ecologies of Knowledge'. There was also a session on 'Communication strategies for different audiences'. The participants also interacted and learnt from the four village elders from different parts of NBR who take children for walks in the forests to educate them about different facets of nature. Blogs are an interesting tool for communication and on the third day the participants planned for a session where one of them who was a blogger answered questions on creation and maintenance of a blog. The retreat inspired and enabled us to interact with like-minded people and gain access to resources which otherwise would be difficult.

- **Experiences in Conservation Education-Experiments in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.** Keystone Foundation invited organizations within the Nilgiris who have been conducting conservation education programmes for a sharing and learning process. The seminar was a half-day event on 13th May 2010 at the Bee Museum, Ooty. Presentations on the work undertaken in Conservation Education and also the future prospects were shared. The 21 participants included the Field Director, Mudumalai Tiger Reserve; Divisional Forest Officer, Nilgiri North

Division; Divisional Forest Officer, Nilgiri South Division; Edhkwelynawd Botanical Refuge (EBR); Earth Trust, Ooty; Central Soil And Water Conservation Research And Training Institute (CSWCRTI), Ooty; *Nilgiri Wildlife* and Environment Association (NWEA), Ooty; WWF-India; Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary; Science Forum, Kotagiri; C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation, Ooty and Shola Trust, Gudalur.

Village Conservation Centres

The Village Conservation Centers serve to take the learning out of textbooks and into a community context. The Village Conservation Centers, at Appankappu, Punanjanur, Vellarikombai and Nedungayam strengthen the practical aspects of sustainable use of natural resources. Conservation centers were initially started around the issue of endangered species like cycads. These centers have information related to the area and on other biodiversity issues and serve as a place to conduct programmes. Nurseries for Rare, Endemic and Threatened (RET) species are managed in these centers and children from nearby villages are also brought here to convey the message of conservation. Flora and fauna are also being monitored at a village level here. Wallpapers are prepared at conservation centers by the children of the area, which speak about the activities in each center. Selections from these wallpapers are published in the NNHS newsletter.

Elders leading children to the forest

We recognise that indigenous cultures have inherent conservation oriented practices. Village elders who were traditional healers, honey hunters, farmers and NTFP collectors from different regions are supported to take the children of the village into the forest and explain about the local biodiversity. This is done on a weekends and is one of the most interesting conservation education programmes. While the new generation is informed about traditions and practices, community elders are also respected as bare-foot teachers. A total of seven elders are part of this program - Sugunder Poov from Bikkapathymund, Kotagiri belonging to Toda community; Veeraiah &



A K Bhoajn of Sigur belonging to the Irula community; Madamma & Chenanjamma of Punanjanur belonging to Sholiga community; Janakiyamma of Vellarikombai belonging to Kurumba community and Abhilash of Nedungayam, Nilambur belonging to Paniya community. A total of 80 such visits involving 588 children were conducted during the period.

Nature camps

During school vacations and weekends, residential camps are organized at field centers of Keystone at Sigur, Assanur and Pillur. Camps at Sigur were called '*Life in the Rain Shadow Region*' and camps conducted at Geddesal were called '*Life in the Sub-Tropical Forests*'. The team organized talks about ecology, games to evoke conservation initiatives, mapping of natural resources, rivers and districts and documentary film screening etc. in these camps. Six camps were organized and 137 children from all over the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve participated.

Tribal Residential Schools

Six Government Tribal Residential (GTR) Schools have been part of monthly educational programmes, which are aimed at school children from 7th to 9th standards. A group of 25 to 35 children are selected from each school. The programmes include screening of documentary films, developing posters with

locally available material, conservation-oriented discussions, painting, enacting skits and stories etc. Presentations on topics such as symbiosis, adaptations, geography, honey bees, butterflies, birds, Western Ghats, endemism, NTFP, nutrition and health care, forests, pollination, impacts of sand mining and soil erosion, clouds, rain etc. were made followed by discussions.

Bee Museum

The Honey & Bee Museum depicts information on indigenous honey bees and indigenous people who traditionally harvest honey. With support from Nature Conservation Foundation, Mysore, a Nature Discovery section was added to the Bee Museum in 2010 with exhibits featuring pictures, information and interactive games. Every month, events are organized for school children and general public are invited. These events are mostly a presentation/slide show by experts who have worked in the Nilgiris. This year four such talks were organized which were attended by approximately 200 people. Visits for adivasi children are also organized to the Bee Museum. In all there were close to 7000 visitors to the Bee Museum during the period.



No.	Type of Programme	No. of Programmes	Participants
1	Workshops and Meetings	4	96
	1. Conservation Education Network 2. Experiences in Conservation Education - Experiments in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve 3. Nature Teach 4. Two internal workshops		
2	Village Conservation Centres	17	171
3	Elders leading children to the forest	80	588
4	Nature camps	6	137
5	Tribal Residential Schools Mavanallah GTR school in Sigur, Indira Gandhi Memorial Residential School in Nilambur, Kerala, Geddesal GTR in Sathyamangalam Kunjapanai GTR in Kotagiri Power House 3 GTR in Pillur Ashramsala School in Punanjanur.	42	944
6	Bee Museum		
	Presentation/slide show by experts	4	200
	Visits for adivasi children	4	46
	Exposure visits	5	227
	Visitors	-	6945

Biodiversity Research

Human Wildlife Conflicts

The human wildlife conflict situation in 62 villages across the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve was studied to select 18 villages for detailed monitoring. This has revealed interesting facts on real time conflict situations, which in certain cases were in stark contrast to people's perspective on conflicts. The monitoring of conflicts is envisaged to continue for a few more months, in order to get comprehensive data from all these villages. This is imperative in terms of suggesting mitigation measures that are appropriate for the problem and also endorsed by key stakeholders. The collaboration established with the Nature Conservation Foundation, Mysore in this regard has been valuable and is crucial to



implementing preventive measures in areas of high conflict.

Monitoring of *Phyllanthus indofishcheri* (Amla)

The experiments on harvests conducted on *Phyllanthus indofishcheri* since 2008 are complete now. Data that is available from the last three years will be analysed and the results are to be shared with the communities and other stake holders in regions of high amla harvest.

Community Bee Reserve

Preliminary work has been done in Bikkapathy Mund near Kotagiri for declaring a Community Bee Reserve in the region. Bikkapathy Mund, a Toda village surrounded by sholas and grasslands interspersed with wattle, tea and eucalyptus plantations, is known for good populations of *Apis cerana*. Our earlier research on estimating honey bee nest densities in the region revealed interesting facts about the nesting patterns of *Apis cerana* bees in this region. The Todas are known to rear *Apis cerana* in the wild and also maintain the cavities in which these bees nest. This purpose of creating a community reserve for bees is to prevent the destruction of these cavities by people from nearby villages through inappropriate harvest measures. This effort is supported by the Hill Area Development Programme, the Nilgiris District.



Student Interns

Lisa Mandle, a PhD Botany student from the University of Hawaii is associated with Keystone and is studying the Phoenix grass, specifically monitoring its growth and the impact of fire and grazing. She was here from May to July 2010 for the penultimate round of her field work.

Three M.Sc students from Kannur University were associated with Keystone during this year as part of their thesis field work. Two of them worked on human wildlife conflicts in the Wayanad region, while the other worked on pollinators in agricultural crops in the Kotagiri region.

Trainings and field courses

- *Nature Teach* - A two-day workshop for school teachers in the Nilgiris was conducted on 19th of May 2010. Nine teachers participated in this program. There was a field visit to Bikkapathy Mund, a Toda village, where the participants found out about endemism, adaptation, symbiosis, resilience and other ecological principles, as also to learn about organic ways of living and growing food. *Mandakal studio* acted as the perfect place for teachers to gain a deeper understanding of the natural world. Taking advantage of presentations and interactive films helped teachers learn about nature and our relationship with it. This exciting session helped teachers to reach out to students using film as a



tool, giving them a better understanding of the evolution of life on Earth. We have prepared a list of activities a school could do in the regular school time.

- *Internal Workshops* – Two workshops were conducted in March and September 2010, on developing conservation education material as well as to build capacity of staff in conducting the programmes for children.



Restoration

Restoration activities were taken to a new level by increasing the number of forest species at each nursery to cater to tea estates and urban landscape requirements. With the recent association with the Rain Forest Alliance certification, tea estates have been coming forward to create more diversity within their land holdings. In the past year, more than 1900 saplings were given to tea estates and colleges in the Kotagiri region. In addition to this, saplings were given to the local Forest Department to aid their afforestation programmes. Planting was also undertaken at sacred grove sites and in local schools and colleges.

Name of the area	No. of saplings on 01/04/2010	No. of species	No. of New species added	No. of saplings raised during the year	No. of saplings planted during the year
Sigur	7805	45	9	2801	1548
Campus, Kotagiri	5747	21	3	4682	355
Baviyur	-	19	7	1401	1202
Bikkapathy Mund	1718	8	5	1836	0
Galidhimbam	6908	37	9	1653	1700
Punanjanur	4083	16	4	5943	955
Nilambur	700	0	0	0	0
Total	26261	-	-	18316	6963

Village Conservation Awards

Village conservation awards were instituted this year to be presented annually to an adivasi village within the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve. The villages were invited to submit applications detailing ecologically and culturally sound initiatives that they have undertaken in their village. There were mixed responses from the communities and there were 15

villages who expressed their interest in the award. The villages were asked to present their activities to a jury comprising Rev. Philip K. Mulley, Anthropologist, Mr. Manoharan, ACCORD and Ms. Snehlatha Nath, Keystone Foundation. The award was given to Chokkanalli village in Sigur for their concerted efforts in conservation activities in their village. They decided to use the award money to

repair the solar fence around their village so that they could continue agricultural activities. A special jury award was given to Kumbalapara village in Nilambur and the award money was used to install household level solar lighting. This reduced their dependence on firewood to keep away wild animals at night. Efforts have been taken to increase the level of participation and also assess how communities have understood this concept and how things need to be taken forward for the award in 2011.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- The Nilgiri Natural History Society was launched on the 18th of February, 2010 by the Honourable Union Minister for Environment and Forests, Mr. Jairam Ramesh at the Keystone campus during the Save Western Ghats Meet. The Society comes out with two newsletters every year. The activities of the Society are linked with the Bee Museum in Ooty. A nature/cultural trail for the members was started early this year. The current membership to the society is 97. More

information on the Society is available at <http://nnhs.in>

- We have made significant contributions to setting up Nature Interpretation Centres at Mudumalai Tiger Reserve and Longwood Shola Reserve, Kotagiri.
- Inauguration of the Nature Discovery Centre at the Bee Museum in collaboration with NCF, Mysore.
- Conservation Awards were presented to two villages in the NBR.

WAY FORWARD

The way forward for the conservation activities would be

1. To follow up on the human wildlife conflicts work in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve and to push forward for implementing mitigation measures



in zones of high conflict. Active participation from key stakeholders is envisaged in developing a participatory approach towards mitigating conflict.

2. To engage with the civil society through the Nilgiri Natural History Society in conservation action would be the main focus of the coming year. Effective communication and outreach is planned.
3. To continue with the conservation education activities at the Village Conservation Centres, Field Centres and GTR schools. Efforts will be made to expand the area of work and to use the recently developed education module in conservation education.
4. Extension of the village conservation awards and constant follow up on the implementation.

NETWORKS, MEETINGS, VISITS, TRAININGS, LEARNINGS

Save Western Ghats Youth meeting, Moodbidri

Sudhakar and Mahadesha attended the Save Western Ghats Youth meeting held at Moodbidri in Karnataka. The meeting was attended by youth from five states within the Western Ghats. They met and discussed the issues with regard to biodiversity and conservation and also to chalk out possible measures to counter the issues and threats. They had also visited the now abandoned Kudremukh mining area. Such meetings and events for youth are envisaged to be conducted in other states also.

University of Leeds

Sumin went to the Institute of Integrative and Comparative Biology at the University of Leeds as a Visiting Research Assistant. This visit was through the UKIERI grant administered through the Nature Conservation Foundation, Mysore. This visit was mainly to work on the data of the human wildlife conflicts study in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve along with a PhD student from the University of Leeds, associated with NCF.



PUBLICATIONS

i. Books:

- a. Wild Foods of the Pillur Region. Keystone Foundation, 2010

ii. Articles

- a. Mutualistic relationships of *Cycas circinalis* L. – Indigenous People and Forests in India, 2010
- b. A Forest Trail of Jangli Almond – *Hydnocarpus pentandra* – Voices from the Forest, 2010

iii. Papers

- a. Nesting requirements of the rock bee, *Apis dorsata* in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, India. Tropical Ecology, 2010
- b. Differential nesting densities of South Asian honey bees across forested habitats: Implications for conservation, In press, 2011

iv. Posters

- a. Information Centre Posters – Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, Longwood Shola
- b. Weeds of the NBR
- c. Information posters for village conservation centres on butterflies and other biodiversity.



Culture & People

OBJECTIVES

The Culture and People programme area aims to help indigenous communities to strengthen their traditional culture and local governance along with their rights over land and forest. This involves linking with Livelihood, Conservation and Environmental activities. The highlights of the year include ascertaining status of land holding by the communities, mitigating human wildlife conflict, adding more areas in *Nilagiri Seemai Sudhi* news, gathering information on population, documenting stories & songs, and facilitating issue of community certificates.

ACTIVITIES

The Forest Rights Act provided an opportunity to interact with communities to get a sense of the current situation of landholding and access to forest

based resources. We facilitated this process with the Environmental Governance group. The first hurdle was the lack of community certificates among many community members. Lack of land records and composite land holdings without the entitlement of the current owners complicated matters further. This effort was a sustained one throughout the year. Seemai Sudhi volunteers played a major role in collecting information and filling forms in Kotagiri and Coonoor regions.

Health support proved to be demanding and lack of sufficient funds hampered this area of work. A detailed report of support provided is given later on in this section.

Education support and counseling for students was successful and is a promising area of work for the

coming years. A narrative of this year's support and activities is provided later on in this section.

Nilagiri Seemai Sudhi has successfully completed four years of publication. Popular among the communities, currently 1000 copies are being distributed monthly. However, it still needs financial support. The Community Radio Station (CRS), that we have applied for during the year and is expected to start in the coming year, would boost this effort significantly by adding a new dimension to the communication.

It has been a long felt need to put up sign boards in the Sacred Groves to highlight their cultural and ecological significance as also the role of the indigenous communities in conserving them. We teamed up with the Conservation team and put up signboards in four Sacred Groves.

We supported the Nilgiri Natural History Society (NNHS) to organize cultural evenings at the Bee Museum. Demonstration of painting and embroidery skills is a popular component of such events.

Seemai Sudhi also provides current market information on the prices of honey, coffee, pepper, silk cotton and agricultural crops. This effort was carried out with support from the Livelihoods team.

Audiovisual media survey

In order to assess the feasibility of a Community Radio Station (CRS) in the area, we collected data regarding availability of FM Radio receivers, DVD/CD players and television sets with cable/dish connections. Free television sets distributed by the



Tamil Nadu Government have reduced the number of radio listeners. Mobile handsets with FM radio are popular among the younger generation. There are a considerable number of CD/DVD players with dish/cable connection at individual households. This points to the possibility of distributing video programming to be played on the DVD/CD players, in addition to the CRS. Developing community oriented audio/video programmes is a major area of work in the coming year.

Community Certificates

Community Certificates are mandatory in the process of filing claims under the Forest Rights Act (FRA). Due to the distance to the Taluk offices and the number of trips to be made, most community members have not applied for community certificates. They have realised the importance of community certificates in establishing their rights under FRA and availing themselves of government schemes. In Kotagiri and Coonoor, by our estimate, more than 600 people lack community certificates. Our volunteers helped 600 community members in submitting applications to the respective Revenue Divisional Officers for getting Scheduled Tribes community certificates. Verification process by the respective issuing authorities is underway. The process is likely to be completed only after the state assembly elections are concluded in May 2011.



School Dropouts

Across regions children were seen dropping out of school at 8th or 10th standard for different seasons. We conducted a survey of school dropouts and presented the findings to the District Revenue Officer at the Tribal Advisory Committee meeting. We propose to take up this issue and work towards reversing this trend in the coming year.

Given the situation of dropouts who are in need of employment, at our behest, the District Administration in the Nilgiris has agreed to lower the qualification limit for driving licenses to 8th Standard for members of the indigenous community.

Population Census

A baseline survey of the population of all indigenous communities in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve was conducted this year. The population details of Gudalur taluk was provided by ACCORD, Gudalur. This is the first time such an extensive survey was undertaken and information regarding land holding/land status, community certificate, literacy level, marital status, social status, physically/mentally challenged etc. were recorded along with details of craftsmen and traditional medical practitioners. This survey can be used for various interventions by us as it provides a current household status with few inaccuracies. We will refine this process and update the census details on a yearly basis. We also hope to provide accurate information to the District

Administration to help plan/better implement government schemes.

Nilagiri Seemai Sudhi

Entering into its fifth year, our monthly newspaper has started covering news from indigenous communities in Punnanjanur (Karnataka) and Nilambur (Kerala) in Tamil language. This has given an opportunity to the communities in the Nilgiris to know more about the indigenous communities living in the other states of Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.

Reading aloud the newspaper to elders who cannot read or write was a new effort this year. This is done by the volunteers who gather news from their respective areas. It not only updates the illiterate elders on the news, but they also share information about their area in turn. An offshoot of this effort is educated elders reading out and conveying the information to youngsters who have not completed their primary education.

Volunteers supported us not only in Seemai Sudhi news collection but also in population study, FRA work, community certificate data collection, organizing cultural events, etc. They have gone way ahead in their news gathering and writing, thus helping Seemai Sudhi present the news with quality. They have undergone basic training in news collection and writing. We would like to see better circulation and sales of the newspaper in the coming year. Pictorial reporting is another area we will take up in the coming year.

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group Funds Meeting

Every year the Ministry of Tribal Welfare allots dedicated funds for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTGs) to develop housing, animal husbandry, etc. This fund has not reached any of the PTGs in the NBR in a significant manner. Hence, two meetings were held at Keystone for the Kuruma community from Kotagiri and Coonoor regions wherein accessing and utilizing these funds were discussed. Monitoring the PTG Fund was also extensively discussed. This effort was done in



collaboration with the Environmental Governance Group. We hope to get more disbursements of this fund in the Nilgiris as a whole in the coming year.

Hubba – Our yearly theme festival

This year's theme was Seemai and the festival was named Seemai Hubba. This event was hosted by Keystone on 24th - 25th June, 2010. The Village Conservation Award Ceremony was also a part of the Hubba. Two days of extensive discussions about the participant villages to decide the winner left little time to discuss the traditional Seemai of the communities. Discussions on Forest Rights Act with respect to the ancestral domains (Seemai) was the highlight of this hubba. People from Kotagiri, Coonoor, Sigur, Pillur, Assanur, Punanjanur and Nilambur participated in the Hubba and the feedback was to add more information about Seemai in the Hubba of 2011. We hope to stay focused on the theme in the coming years.

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

August 9, 2010 was a big event in Ooty, the headquarters of the Nilgiris. Every year we celebrate this day as the day of the Adivasis of the NBR. This year, we decided to have it in Ooty and elaborate arrangements were made for people coming from different regions of NBR. Stay and food was organized at the Police Club and the event was hosted in the Anna Indoor Stadium. Stalls displaying culturally important food and biodiversity related materials were set up. It was well received by the participants. The District Collector inaugurated the event and the guest of the day was Mr. K. Ramachandran, the Minister for Khadi & Village Industries. Day-long celebrations showcasing the dance & music of the communities will stay a long time in the participants' minds. The success of this event led to people asking us to hold the celebrations locally so that more community members can participate. We would want these celebrations to spread all over NBR and attract more and more community members to make the occasion a landmark event.



Emergency Medical Support

As the size of the medical fund was not enough to support people with all types of illnesses, the criteria were changed to support those who are in immediate need. Women and children were given preference and the fund was renamed as the 'Emergency Medical Support'. This year we supported childbirth, people with gangrene, spinal cord surgery and heart conditions and victims of elephant attack. Partial support for transport and funeral expenses were also provided.

Health counseling for creating awareness about personal hygiene and common diseases and the reasons for it along with awareness on HIV/AIDS was conducted in Kotagiri for community members from Kotagiri and Sigur. More women participated in these meetings. Dr. Meera and Mr. Vinay, experts in HIV/AIDS counseling and Counselors from Kotagiri Government Hospital conducted the meetings. Staff from Ashwini, Gudalur, a hospital working on health issues of Adivasis conducted one awareness camp at Sigur. The numbers and types of cases supported by the Fund are given below.

Nature of Emergency	No. of Cases
Child Care	13
Women's health	19
Surgery	5
Funeral (Ambulance)	2
Mens Health	23
Vehicle support	12
Total	74



Support provided by Education Fund to students for higher education

For the second consecutive year, we have organized counseling for higher education for students completing 10th and 12th standards. 78 students participated in this two-day event. Teachers from local schools, Mr. Raju from Cordite Factory School, Mr. Gopinath from NPA Polytechnic, Mr. Krishnan from Agasthiya ITI and Mr. Rajendran from Kadasolai School conducted the first day of counseling. The students were divided into three groups and inputs on choosing the right course and options suited to them were discussed elaborately.

On the second day, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Perianaicken Palayam sent a group of teachers who were joined by teachers from Riverside Public School, Kotagiri to provide details on the courses available in the region. Options of joining ITI, Teachers' Training, Polytechnic courses, Arts and Science degrees, Professional courses etc. were explained to the students. Discussions on providing carpentry and masonry training to people who drop out after the public examinations were also held.

Ramakrishna Mission pledged their support to help five students join higher studies and as many have benefited from this effort. The numbers and types of cases supported by the Fund are given below.

Type of support	No. of cases
College Fees	10
Teacher s Training Fees	5
Vocational Trainings	4
School support	8
Total	27

Adivasi Resource Centre

A centre to house the culture & people activities and lend more focus to this area has been completed in January 2011 putting an end to a long wait. This spacious building, that has a meeting hall with a mezzanine and an adjoining room for day-to-day activities, will showcase the cultural heritage of the communities. Apart from the meetings to be held relating to various issues faced by the communities, this building will also host the community radio project, the license for which has been applied for.

Crafts Project

The Toyota Foundation has provided a small grant for skill development of craftsmen from the indigenous communities. This effort will help revive the age old skills of the communities and add more members to strengthen the groups. We have identified the groups to be trained in different communities and have organized two such trainings so far.



Ajile Bottu Painting training

During February 2011, 11 days of intensive training were given to Kalpana, Baviyur and Rammoorthy, Kolikorai, Coonoor by Ajile Bottu group to develop their painting skills in the Kurumba style. They were trained to make poster-size paintings and painted

greeting cards. This has increased the strength of Ajile Bottu group from three to five.

Kota Pottery training

We had organized a Kota Pottery workshop in the Bee Museum on 15th February, 2010. Women from the Kota community participated in this one-day workshop to train women potters from the younger generation and improve the infrastructure.

Women from Puthukotagiri, Kollimalai, Kundah Kotagiri, Thirichikadi and Sholur villages participated in this event.

Indigenous Calendar 2011

The aim of bringing out a special calendar depicting the cultural diversity of the indigenous communities in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve is to reinforce the ancient traditions and rituals of all communities, whether in vogue or forgotten due to cultural pressures of various kinds. The themes of the calendars, in the years past, have been their music, traditional food and places of worship. This year, an attempt has been made to highlight the unique ornaments of all indigenous communities to focus on their simple yet ornate designs. Silver has been the most favoured metal used in all the jewellery



which has its proven health benefits when worn on the body. The indigenous communities have understood this aspect of silver and continue to wear them with pride. We have distributed ten thousand copies of the calendar throughout the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve. The feedback from the communities is that the calendar is well-designed and produced with comprehensive information.

VISITS

Selvi and Subramani participated in the Community Radio Capacity Building workshop in Velankanni, Tamil Nadu organized by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Community Radio Forum, India. This three-day workshop covered most aspects of the usefulness of community radio, how to make, edit and broadcast programmes, licensing process and equipments. A visit was organized by Dhan Foundation to *Kalanjiam Samuga Vanoli* station to see the community radio in action. Selvi had gone to Bhubaneswar for Directors' Linking and Learning Workshop on HIV/AIDS mainstreaming organized by CordAid, where HIV/AIDS Mainstreaming in different contexts and geographical areas were discussed.

Overall, this year has been a year full of work in progress which has not reached its set goals. More groundwork and synergy with other groups have been the highlights of this year's work. Team building and reliability of volunteers has gone up. A rare year that has gone by without a publication!





Environmental Governance

OBJECTIVES

Our work on facilitating the implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) continued this year. With the near completion of submission of individual claim forms, the focus shifted to strengthening Community Forest Resource (CFR) discussions among adjoining village communities and with the Forest Department.

The objective of the programme itself is to strengthen environmental governance mechanisms in the NBR with a multi-stakeholder approach focussing on decentralized community based resource management. The programme endeavours to engage with academicians and government at various levels as well as business interests in an attempt to mainstream environmental governance in the development paradigm.

ACTIVITIES

a. Facilitation of individual claims

A significant portion of tribal villages hold land in Reserve Forest areas. There have been obstacles to cultivating this land due to issues of unclear tenure and subsequent conflicts with the Forest Department. In this context, the process of facilitating individual claim forms for recognizing possession of these lands, continued this year. Given overleaf is a summary of the number of claims submitted.

b. Capacity Building of Forest Rights Committees

A series of meetings were held with Forests Rights Committees (FRC) at the village level to facilitate discussion on the submission of individual and community claims. These meetings culminated in taluk level meetings with representatives of

	Name of Special Tribal Gram sabha	Name of Village	No	Individual Claims			Housing
				Extent (Ac.)			
				Agriculture			
				Total	Max	Min	
1	Baviyur	Baviyur	25	58.00	5.75	1.00	1.50
2	Baviyur	Mettukal	65	95.50	6.00	0.25	3.50
3	Melkoop	Kilkoop	9	17.30	2.00	2.00	0.97
4	Melkoop	Melkoop	21	20.50	2.00	0.50	0.66
5	Melkoop	Pudur	35	46.38	5.00	3.00	NA
6	Garrikiyur	Garrikiyur	38	54.00	3.00	1.00	NA
7	Bambalacombai	Bambalacombai	17	6.00	0.55	0.15	0.85
8	Bambalacombai	Mel Korangumedu	3	17.86	8.00	5.00	0.24
9	Bambalacombai	Mallikorai	6	40.00	8.00	5.00	0.40
10	Chengalpudur	Joghicombai	12	61.50	9.00	2.00	0.51
11	Chengalpudur	Chengalpudur	21	117.44	9.45	0.20	1.80
12	Chengalpudur	Chengalcombai	12	66.90	9.98	2.00	0.21
13	Banagudi	Banagudi	19	37.43	2.00	2.00	0.57
14	Mooperkadu	Mooperkadu	17	38.00	5.00	1.00	0.80
15	Mooperkadu	Oonjalaracombai	4	39.00	10.00	9.00	NA
16	Mooperkadu	Masanacombai	7	48.00	10.00	5.00	NA
17	Mooperkadu	Niralacombai	12	61.30	9.95	4.00	0.35
18	Nedugalcombai	Nedugalcombai	49	141.00	9.00	1.00	2.50
19	Barliyar	Pudukadu	16	47.90	9.95	0.50	0.35
20	Barliyar	Melembukarai	5	31.35	9.95	5.10	0.25
21	Barliyar	Chinnakurumbadi	10	27.10	9.00	2.00	NA
22	Barliyar	Indiranagar	10	78.15	9.95	0.40	0.59
23	Barliyar	Maricode	7	31.00	5.00	4.00	0.30
24	Barliyar	Periya Kurumbadi	14	47.50	10.00	1.00	0.40
25	Barliyar	Kolikorai	17	87.25	9.60	1.55	0.30
	Total		451	1316.36			14.86

the committees to share issues on filling of claim forms and submission. Three such meetings were held in Kotagiri and Coonoor.

c. Engagement with SDLC and DLC

We continued our work with the Sub Divisional Level Committee (SDLC) and the District Level Committee (DLC) under the FRA to strengthen their awareness on the issues in submission of claims and the support required by FRCs in accessing government records and maps.

d. Interaction with Revenue and Forest Department Officials

One of the issues discussed in the District Level Committee was a lack of awareness and coordination between Revenue and Forest Department officials on the ground level implementation of the Forest Rights Act. At the request of the DLC, a coordination meeting was convened for officials from the Kotagiri, Coonoor and Udthagamandalam talukas to discuss the various points of cooperation required. The Revenue Divisional Officer, Coonoor inaugurated the meeting while the District Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Officer presided over it. Officials including Village Administrative Officers, Revenue Inspectors, Forest Guards, Foresters and Range Forest Officers participated.

e. Work with Village Forest Councils

In continuation with the study on Village Forest Councils (VFC) undertaken last year, we initiated work with three VFCs this year. The objective was to mobilize and support the councils to engage in collection and sale of non-timber-forest produce (NTFP). The practice in the region has by and large been that of the collection rights of the year's produce being auctioned off to the highest bidder. This not only allows entry to 'outside' business interests into the forests, but also reduces the VFC's ownership and accountability in forest management. In this context, we supported the Garikkiyur, Bambalacombai and Kurumbadi VFCs in NTFP collection and sale. This initiative is actively supported by the Divisional Forest Officer of the Nilgiri North Division.

IMPACT FACTORS

The most tangible impact of our work this year has been in our support of the Village Forest Councils. Collection and sale of non timber forest produce was heretofore thought to be beyond the capacity of these bodies. Our initiative this year, in collaboration with the DFO has proved to be an illustration that these councils are able to handle financial transactions and organize NTFP collectors to participate in a collective enterprise. This has not only built the confidence of village members of these councils but also demonstrated that local initiatives can strengthen transparency and accountability in community based enterprises.

WAY FORWARD

The Programme will continue to work on strengthening institutional mechanisms at various levels for community forest resource (CFR) management. In this regard, the focus will be on working out the functional relationship between the village forest councils and the Sec 5 committees under the FRA. Within the overall CFR domain, we will focus on the documentation and revival of systems around sacred groves and wetlands.



NETWORKS, MEETINGS, VISITS, TRAININGS, LEARNINGS

State Level Workshop on CFR

In order to initiate a learning network on Community Forest Resource, a workshop with other organizations in Tamil Nadu working with forest dependant communities, was organized in January 2011. The participating organisations included the Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association, The Island Trust, Tribal Health Initiative, Kani Community leaders from the Kalakkad Mudanthurai Tiger Reserve (KMTR) and team members from the Vazhndhu Kaattuvom Project. Members of Forest Rights Committees from Kotagiri and Coonoor also participated in the workshop.

Shri Ganesan Murthy shared the progress of the claims submission process for CFR in KMTR, while FRC members discussed the progress in the Nilgiris. The workshop was useful in highlighting the importance of invoking FRA provisions for strengthening Community-Forestry linkages.

National Workshop on CFR

P Chandran along with Forest Rights Committee members from Baviyur, Garikkiyur and Jadayancombai attended a national workshop on mangement of CFR under the FRA, held in Bhubhaneshwar in March 2011. The workshop was a useful forum to dicuss issues in submitting CFR claims and learn from experiences from across the country.

Experience Sharing

Shri Rajan, President of the Pechiparai Panchayat in Kanyakumari and a youth leader of the Kani community in the district accepted our invitation and visited us for an interaction with the Forest Rights Committee members in Kotagiri and Coonoor. The focus of his sharing was on the documentation processes followed by his Panchayat in receiving claims under the FRA. The interaction was instructive and the participants appreciated Rajan's openness in discussing the various difficulties faced at the Panchayat level.

Interaction with Shri C K Sridharan

Shri C K Sridharan, ex-PCCF, TN and member of the National Forest Rights Act Committee, jointly constituted by the Ministries of Environment & Forests and Tribal Affairs, visited Keystone for an interaction with community members and FRCs. During the course of the meeting, he clarified several points regarding the provisions of the Act. The presentations by the community members covered ground level challenges in the implementation of the Act.

PUBLICATIONS

A Tamil poster detailing the various features of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers' (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act was published and displayed this year at the CEPF mid-term review meeting held in Kotagiri. The poster is targeted at village communities, to raise awareness about the provisions of the Act.





Livelihoods

OBJECTIVES

Farming in traditional land holdings, gathering of wild honey, collecting non timber forest produce, beekeeping, non-farming activities and collecting medicinal plants were main sources of income in the past, largely dependent on the natural resources around their regions. Wage labour which was a supplementary source of income earlier, has now become necessary in today's life style of the communities. Earlier, indigenous people's life style was strongly woven with environmental values but that is facing a challenge today.

1. To improve the quality of life of indigenous people
2. To increase and enhance sustainable income avenues based on natural resources around them

3. To improve and create nutritional security and food sovereignty
4. To create local farmer's institutions, building their capacity to manage and govern their land and forest resources
5. To strengthen community enterprises and make them autonomous

ACTIVITIES

Farmers' Revolving Fund

The mission statement of the Farmers' Revolving Fund Group is 'Promote growing food grains, fodder and commercial crops and conserve environment through soil & moisture conservation and organic practices, revive locally evolved indigenous seeds, land use governance and strengthening financial status.

The farmers' revolving fund is the anchoring system for various farming activities like land cleaning, tilling, soil & stone bunding, fencing, installation of irrigation systems and supporting off-farm activities. Large loans were disbursed for livestock purchase and house repair as asset building. Crop protection and secured irrigation were demanded in farmer's group meetings. A collective loan and a part-grant yielded great success in Kilpillur, Neeradi, Bangalapadugai, Thadasalati, Ramaranai, Mavanatham, and Ittarai villages. Savings ability of the farmers has improved and credit facilities and commitments are governed by community committees.

The farmers' revolving funds are at a small scale and could not provide large loans. The funds from the 'Understanding Diversity' and 'Food Security and Diversity' projects enhanced the number of large investments this year for irrigation support, erection of battery-operated fences against crop raiding by animals, establishing regional seed banks and soil conservation efforts as complementary to overall agriculture development. The farmer-led experiments on *Ragi* cultivation, crop characterisation and crop variety purification supported the implementation.

Traditional Agriculture

- Seed banks have been organized in four regions with community participation. Traditional seeds of grains (millet), grams, greens, oil seeds, tubers and vegetable seeds, which are locally grown and evolved, are selectively gathered and stored using chemical-free methods. Farmers who borrow from the seed bank will return twice the volume of seeds to the bank, all organically grown. Such farmers are trained in crop varietal purification techniques and seed selection processes.
- The leader of the farmers' group is trained to keep seed stock registers, varietal schedules, stock inflow/outflow registers and organic/biocontrol measures.
- The commitment is strong from traditional leaders to revive the practice. The management of seed bank is taken up by the leader in - a strong initiative.
- Conducted training on compost and bio input preparation.
- Farmers were equipped to use bio extracts for crop protection, preparing plant growth promoters using individual drums and vessels. Bio-extracts such as *Panchakaviya*, *Thasakaviya*,

Financial details of Farmers' Revolving Funds for 2010-11

(INR 000s)

Name of Farmers Group	Savings	Loan outstanding	Balance
Pillur	12.65	44.63	204.06
Assanur		131.11	217.01
Kokode	20.64	33.43	22.01
Konavakarai	58.94	74.62	87.41
Coonoor	4.64	0	28.46
Punanjanur	7.70	0	7.70
Sigur Water Users Group	50.87	0	50.88
Sigur Farmers Group	8.45	123.42	156.01
Total	163.89	407.23	773.54

enhanced dung solutions, *Agni-asthra*, and fish and egg solutions enhanced crop productivity, improved soil living organisms and strengthened the plants against diseases. The extracts are prepared from leaves, roots, medicinal plants, cow dung, and cow urine to control pest and diseases.

- Soil tests were conducted and the soil nutritional requirement is being met through composting.
- An effective exchange programme on pollinator bees, ecological services provided by bees, sustainable harvesting techniques, value addition of bees wax and honey and economic benefit through community enterprise was conducted.
- Various composting techniques were undertaken in all regions - Bin compost method - pits in rows, cubical pits, anaerobic-underground, Aerobic over ground and vermi composting.
- Revived the practice of Mannukaran/Gowda - the village agriculture resource person having traditional knowledge of fertile status of the soil, diseases & pest management, weather conditions, forecasting and selection of seed. He visits all fields and collects ear heads, cobs and panicles which are of good quality and makes two measures. He keeps one measure for distributing to villagers again in the next season, and the second measure is offered to deities towards good



weather, good harvest and food festival. Leaders from nine different ancestral regions have participated in the workshop. The pride of such practice is very much alive within the group, yet the introduction of new seed varieties and various government schemes are threats to this relationship between the Mannukaran and the community. In addition to this, lack of updated knowledge of diseases and market supplies (chemical inputs) leads to further widening of the gap between the Mannukaran and the community.

- Establishing Kitchen Gardens - It is a package where families are supported to grow vegetables, greens, tubers, shrubby plants and fruiting trees around their houses. Support is provided to erect a fence on which gourd vegetable like bitter gourd, ridge gourd, pumpkins are grown for initial land preparation. The objective is to ensure that the family grows vegetables for their own consumption and selling surpluses, if any, within the village for some income. The number of participating families has gradually increased in the last six months, especially in Nilambur and the Sigur regions. Kitchen gardening has been taken up well by the tribal women in Nedungkayam, Irritikuthy and Vaniyampuzha.





Conserving seed varieties

Varietal characterization on the following five food crops have been documented

1. *Ragi* (Finger millet) - Six different types in Sigur, Dhimbam, Kotagiri
2. *Samai* (Little millet) - Four different types in Thimbam, Kotagiri
3. *Tenai* (Foxtail millet) - Six different types in Dhimbam, Kotagiri
4. Maize (Traditional variety) - Four different types in Dhimbam
5. Beans - 68 different types in Kotagiri, Dhimbam, Sigur

Such information has been made into posters and displayed in community seed banks and shared during farmers' meetings.

A new community nursery has been established in Bangalapadigai as a model nursery.

As part of reviving seed storing techniques, two underground granaries and two in-house structures were revived. These structures were damaged and unused for the past 27 years. The value, appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of these structures were demonstrated to the younger generation

- Underground granary locally known as *Ragi kuli* - A dug out bottle gourd shaped structure in the front yard of the dwellings; can hold upto 1500 kgs; inner surface is baked by firing of Ragi stalk.
- A cuboidal structure locally known as *Kanara*, built with stone and clay mortar inside dwelling. 3m x 1m x 1m; Designed to store 700-800kg of grains.

A vehicle displaying different types of seeds contributed by people, went through all four regions on a yatra and knowledge regarding seeds and cultivation was shared with the people.



Strategic Gain in Pillur and Arakode regions:

Irrigation security and crop protection through trenches and electric fences have revived agriculture in many villages in Pillur valley. Kilpillur is involved primarily in cultivating banana and vegetables, Neeradi with banana, pulses, grains and vegetables, Melpillur with grains, Poochamarathur with banana, pulses and cereals, Kodyiyur with banana, Kadaman Kombai with grains, and Gethekad and Sithukuni with spices. As a result of fencing support, eight farmers have restarted cultivation in Bangalapadigai.

Studies

A study of the expenditure involved in cultivation of various crops in the region showed some important trends. Irrigation, field guarding and land preparation are the major expenditures incurred in crop cultivation. Food grain cultivation involves nil expenditure in terms of chemical inputs and also doesn't involve transport. Hence the community production centre undertaking value addition of grains has widened the scope of millet cultivation and self-consumption. A booklet in Tamil on crop and nutritional value is under production.

A study on pollinators and conserving habitat involved identifying specific pollinators visiting specific crops and resulting pollination, role of native pollinators and crop productivity benefits and sharing the findings with farmers.

Community Enterprises: Production Centers - Heading towards Autonomy

- All Production Centre Development (PCD) operations were streamlined with periodic internal audit. Sivakumar, the PCD accountant has taken a sincere effort in efficient cash disbursement and book keeping.
- Except Bangalapadigai PCD, in all other PCDs the strength of working women has increased. Production has increased manyfold and supply to LFE and Honey Huts are regular.

- A series of three workshops were conducted for PCD members and stakeholders with the help of Access Livelihoods Consulting (ALC), Hyderabad in institutional capacity building. The members were trained in product costing, making business plan for next five years, strategic plan, membership, registration of the institution etc.
- Strong leadership amongst women members has been developed. Rajamani represents Pillur, Padma represents Assanur, Pappa represents Amuthasurabhi and Sasikala represents Kokode, while Sumitra represents Pudukad PCD.
- Members and stake holders from all the PCDs were engaged in a dialogue and they have agreed to launch an independent people's institution.
- The catchment area of each PCD has been formally defined. A series of village meetings were held with all stakeholders on membership registration.
- Pattakarimbu centre has merged with Adivasi Vana Samrakshana Samithi (AVSS) and production has resumed in a new building. In principle, the District Forest Officer and Range Officer have agreed to support the production through the revolving fund.

- Bannari honey hut has been expanded to 168 sqft area and has been redone with more shelf space.
- Kurumbadi centre has shifted to a new working shed at Pudukad. The production has been increased with the addition of three flavours of lip balms and two flavours of soaps. Four new members have joined the production centre.
- Tirunelli AVSS (Wayanad) members were trained in value addition and equipped with processing equipments.
- Department of Post-harvesting, Tamil Nadu Agriculture University (TNAU) conducted value addition (Pickle and Jam making) trainings in Pudukad, Semanarai, Assanur and Vazhathottam.
- Modification of Assanur PCD building has been completed to meet requirements stipulated under the Fruit Products Order. The process of obtaining the FPO licence is in progress.
- The Sir Dorabji Tata Trust funded livelihoods project has been completed. There was an evaluation visit in January 2011.
- The Pattakarimbu centre has conducted training programmes for value addition and sustainable harvesting practices to the VSS network in Kerala at the request of the forest department.
- The Pattakarimbu AVSS has a new working building while the Tirunelli AVSS is located in the Forest Department quarters.



Financial details of production centre for year 2010-11

(INR 000s)

Production centre	Wages given	Sales	Purchase
Amuthasurabhi	84.12	390.24	331.04
Bangalapadigai	76.71	533.48	249.50
Pudukad	143.77	438.80	268.48
Pillur Nadu	38.65	186.10	171.40
Thumbithakadu	226.60	1,847.82	1,266.33
Total	569.85	3,396.44	1,147.75

Technological intervention

1. Different types of solar driers like green house, tunnel, shelf and cabinet driers were fabricated locally for drying herbs, spices, coffee, and fruits.
2. Fabrication of a coffee pulper is in progress.
3. Motorised Amla fruit breaker has been fabricated and is undergoing trials.
4. New oval shaped soap dies were fabricated for Pillur PCD.
5. A new grain dehusker for Samai and Thenai was locally fabricated and is working well. The same equipment can be used for breaking pulses and dehusking rice.

**The Bee scenario**

The bee population/density has been badly affected by deforestation, changes in cropping patterns, introduction of chemicals in farming systems, introduction of exotic honey bees and prevalence of viral disease (TSBV) and pest. The four major honey bee species found in the Indian subcontinent were affected in many ways due to these factors. While the population of migratory bee species like *Apis dorsata* (the Rock bees) and *Apis florea* (the little bee) have been fluctuating, *Apis cerana* (the hive bee) and Dammar bees (stingless) bees are the most vulnerable due to loss of habitat.

Highlights of Beekeeping

In recent years, the focus of beekeeping has been widened to farmers, individuals, development agencies and various Government departments also.

Bees are also being promoted as crop pollinators in all the regions.

Apis cerana (Indigenous) bee keeping is being promoted by distributing 314 new bee hives in the current year to Green Foundation, Agastra Biodynamic Farms, Sathyamangalam division of Tamil Nadu Forest Department, Horticulture department, Kotagiri, Burnside estate, Institute of Forest genetics and Tree Breeding, local farmers and other interested individuals.

Wider adoption of beekeeping is also contributing to the conservation of honeybees in the region.

The sale of beekeeping equipments like hives, filters, knives, hive tools, extractors and colonies amounted to Rs. 2,68,850.

A study was undertaken on the diversity of indigenous pollinators and establishing their habitat in all project sites. Samples of habitats, made out of reeds, clay, wooden hives and bamboo tubes, were set up and the behaviour of pollinators were observed and recorded.

CHALLENGES AND ADAPTATIONS

- Increasing crop raids by wild animals - elephants are a threat to crops and to people's lives. One of the reasons to opt for wage work.
- It is observed that guarding the field (night watch) is inevitable during the crop season. Otherwise the crop may be lost even one day before harvest. Guarding is done by the male member of the family, who ends up resting during day time and as a result it is the woman's responsibility to go for wage work.
- Priority has to be given to crop protection against wild animals and secured irrigation to manage erratic rain pattern in the context of climate change.

NETWORKS, MEETINGS, VISITS, TRAININGS, LEARNINGS

Team members attended a number of training programmes on subjects including documentation, sustainable honey harvesting, community enterprises, sustainable livelihoods, participatory training methodology, organic farming, value addition to grains etc.





Organic Market Development

A TRANSITION PHASE

It has, as usual (!), been a year that has been fantastic – changes that were thought about for so long, did finally take place. After more than two years of debating, discussing and concept notes being written, Last Forest Enterprises, took birth in June 2010. In the meeting of the Board of Trustees in March 2010, the decision was taken that if the marketing activities had to increase and expand in their scope, then the marketing activities needed to create space for themselves and move forward, without always being tied to Keystone Foundation. As the parent institution, Keystone will continue to provide the linkages and conceptual base under which Last Forest would operate.

BIRTH OF LAST FOREST ENTERPRISES

After the decision in March 2010, discussions were held with the auditors and steps initiated to start the registration. Though the registration took place on the 28th of June, consequent steps to open bank accounts, get sales tax registrations number, new logo design, PAN number, new labels, credit card machines the list can be endless....took a long time. Though foreseen, it was a mammoth task that made people quite frustrated at the processes. It also seemed that wherever we applied, the server went for a toss and we were left hanging.... supposedly, a day's work would have us fretting and fuming for over a couple of weeks.

The first discussion with the auditor, showed us the hard reality, that this creation of a new entity would

also bring with it some very tough decisions. Last Forest would start with a debt of INR 32 lakhs – the entire stock would have to be bought over. It did not end there. All fixed assets (primarily furniture and computer equipment), would also have to be bought over. The rent deposits followed – the list kept getting longer... Adding nearly INR 4 lakhs towards fixed assets and INR 2.25 lakhs of rent deposits, it meant that the total payable ended at over INR 38 lakhs. The due date for the entire amount's repayment has been kept as 31st March, 2013 though the attempt will be to repay it as soon as possible. At the end of the present financial year of 2010-11, this amount has reduced to INR 28 lakhs – not a bad beginning, to pat ourselves a bit on the back.

The cut off date for shifting the entire operations was kept as 1st September 2010 – it meant a whole lot of hard work – all stocks in the shops and the warehouses had to be counted and recounted – the figures had to be water tight as there was no second chance. All credit to the group that they managed it – special mention here for Sam, Suganthi and Bala as they swung from shop to shop, helping, assisting and finalizing the figures. It also meant a load on the accounts section – both Monica and Easwar, bent their backs in ensuring the switch over was as smooth as possible. It meant creating new companies in the software and that all stocks shifted overnight and the new day on 1st September meant that all shops moved onto the new companies. This was all done in the background and amazingly, this was all achieved without a shutdown or any inconvenience to the customers. For them, life went on as usual. Yes, there were knocks in the sales as all the people had to concentrate on a range of things for the transition – new orders were held up, neither in nor out. All suppliers and dealers had to incorporate changes into their systems to have Last Forest as a new entity and close down Keystone. Hard negotiations with debtors and creditors ensured that there was never a dull moment.

Type of Institution

One of the crucial decisions of the Board of Trustees of Keystone Foundation, was to make the institution a private limited company. This was primarily due to the reason that if one made it as a trust or society, it would still have a problem of taxation (with effect from 01st April, 2012, when the Direct Taxes Code came into effect). The option of a producer company was ruled out because Last Forest was marketing products from over 40 groups, both large and small, from across India and it was not possible to have a representation of all these groups – this was also liable to change as some groups dropped out from the supply chain due to various reasons and new groups keep joining. Also, each one of these groups/organizations, had already marked up their prices to include profit margins. Even the production groups working through Keystone had their margins built into the prices. Also, since logically, the creation of such an entity was to build and test a model that could sustain itself, it was felt that the institution created should not be finding ways to operate under a non-profit regime but be true to its primary focus on a sustainable profit-making model.

Shareholding pattern

It was decided that the initial shareholding of the company would be by the three founding directors, till the functioning and new organization stabilized. Capital would also be solicited from other friends and acquaintances. An initial list was drawn up and the response was impressive. An amount of INR



19.10 lakhs was raised in the seven months of existence. This has helped overcome the working capital requirements to some extent. Actually, most of this amount was invested in the opening of a new shop in Mysore (explained later). There is also an idea to make the staff of Keystone Foundation and Last Forest Enterprises, as shareholders – this needs to be discussed and implemented over time as there can only be a maximum of 50 shareholders in a private company. All shareholders have been informed that their investments would need three years before they could expect returns.

Design

In the excitement of the new institution, there was one more major change that kept everybody involved and on their toes. There had been a need since some time for someone who could help redesign product labels and some of the other material. Attempts with many friends had just not succeeded in getting the process going. Tried with some design schools but that too did not work. Finally, Gouthami of Travel Another India, put us in touch with the Srishti School of Design. Sneha & Mathew, spent a day discussing with their staff and explaining their ideas and dreams. It seemed we were a little late as most of the students had already decided their projects and we might have had to wait. To our surprise, in a couple of weeks, up popped a student, who was excited to be involved in this exercise. Swati, a final year student, came and spent a few days and saw our work. Many rounds of discussions helped her to come up with some options. When the final design was chosen, we suddenly had a new logo to go with our new entity. It was an instant hit with our customers as we displayed it in our shops.

The first label designs that have rolled out are for honey. Also, the signage of the shops was redone. There was a thinking that we needed to slowly phase out 'Green Shops' and concentrate on building the brand of 'Last Forest'. However, we soon realized that they served different purposes. For the local customers, Green Shop as an identity was very crucial as they saw that as a multi brand outlet that could provide them a range of products from across the



country. Last Forest was a single brand out of a host of other brands. On a larger canvas, Last Forest, was an important entity, as it allowed customers to identify with an institution which represented certain core values in its way of working - a brand that represents the organic/fair trade/forest & agricultural produce based products created by the Keystone Foundation with the indigenous communities of the Nilgiris.

This story will not be complete without mention of Via Media (and Stanley, who leads the group) from Coimbatore. November 2010 provided an opportunity for Mathew to speak at TEDx Coimbatore – he spoke about honeyhunting – the communities that are involved in it, the culture and traditions that go along with it and the final product that we hold in our hands. It was an opportunity to meet and get to know Via Media, a young design and strategy group. This association slowly grew and in 2011, they have been providing tremendous help in getting our communication strategy on the right track, helping us build the brands of Last Forest and Green Shop, effectively.

MYSORE

Mysore has seen the addition of one more shop. The first one got going in September 2009, when the Green Hotel, offered a small space inside their hotel to open a shop for their customers as well as other local clientele. Last year, Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF) offered to start a nature interpretation centre if Last Forest also chipped in and started a shop along with them. This was too good an offer to let go. However, it meant that within the whole atmosphere of changing institutions, there was an added load of trying to set up a new shop. Sam, with his eyes and ears tuned to the possibilities of design in the new shop as well as the extra effort of making new furniture, etc. kept going up and down. The end result was a great shop with excellent space utilization. This was also appreciated by the NCF staff who enjoyed the whole process. The Green Shop got going at the end of December 2010, with a soft launch. All dreams of a tremendous increase in sales came crashing down in a few days as the response to the shop has been very low. Maybe, we should have known, that for a new shop to set itself up and start generating decent returns takes at least two years of investment in terms of time and money. It has been a slow process and with EcoQuest (nature interpretation centre) getting inaugurated recently, the footfalls have increased slowly. Sudhakar has been a pillar in Mysore, seeing the whole process through.

Leaving the Green Shop in the Green Hotel was a tough call for Sudhakar as he had settled in but greater responsibilities left no choice. Usha, a young



woman, joined us to work at the Green hotel Green Shop and has justified the choice. The old shop has had its share of hiccups with lower inflows into the hotel, affecting the sales. It also continued under Keystone till the end of March 2011. The sharp increase in the rental for the premises has put greater pressure for the sales to improve.

IMPORT OF COFFEE ROASTER

This has been another amazing journey in 2010-11. SAIL through its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative, provides an opportunity for NGOs to access some funds. There has been an acute need for a good coffee roaster. This was solved to some extent when a small 1 kg batch roaster was bought from Italy, two years ago. However, with the needs of the market rising and an unstable machine, which frequently broke down, there was an urgent need to be filled. SAIL provided this opportunity. Through its offices in Chennai and Coimbatore, a top of the line product – Probat coffee roaster, from Germany was imported. This took close to eight months as the machine had to be ordered and then shipped all the way. The patience and confidence of the SAIL staff was crucial in keeping us going as the coffee roaster landed on our campus. It has been installed with the support of Kaapi machines, from Bangalore. It is now hoped that the coffee will make an impact in the market.

VISIT TO KUMBAYA

The visit to Bagli in Madhya Pradesh was a great experience as Suganthi and Mathew spent a few days understanding the work that goes into bringing beautiful garments and furnishings to the Green Shops. Kumbaya, the brand and hopefully a new entity, created by Samaj Pragati Sahyog, picks up handloom material from Dastakar Andhra as well as export surplus material from Delhi and works with women in the Bagli region; producing exquisite stuff that have become common in the shops. For many, garments are top of the mind recall (after honey, of course!), when they visit the shops. Hopefully, this partnership will continue to grow and prosper.

SALES

Though this report is looking at a 15 month period, it is to be mentioned that the major part of the analysis will refer to the 12 month period from April 2010 till March 2011. The 15-month sales stood at INR 110 lakhs but for the 12 month period, it was INR 88.48 lakhs. This was lower than our target of crossing 100 lakhs in the financial year of 2010-2011. This is the combined sales under Keystone (5 months – INR 41.05 lakhs) and Last Forest (7 months – INR 47.43 lakhs). There has been a net loss of INR 38 thousands for Keystone.



TOP 10 SUPPLIERS

No.	Supplier	Amount (INR 000s)
1	Samaj Pragati Sahayog, Bagli	720
2	Mitan Handicrafts, Belgaum	237
3	Thumbhithakadu, Assanur	192
4	Malaierasi SHG, Ooty	173
5	Kullu Karishma, Kullu	165
6	Banglapadigai	177
7	Kombai	145
8	Maan Pharmaceuticals, Chennai	124
9	The United Nilgiri Tea Estate Co., Nilgiris	98
10	Amuthasurabhi	89

NEW SUPPLIERS

Smyrna, Ooty
Pristine, Bangalore
Sabala, Belgaum
Thiashola Plantations, Ooty
Vijay Stoneware Pottery, Puducherry
Nature Conservation Foundation, Valparai
Wildcraft India, Chennai
Spiti Seabuckthorn Society, Himachal Pradesh
Mitan Handicrafts Development, Belgaum
Arctic Energy Systems, Delhi
Naturellement, Puducherry

TOP 10 DEALERS

No.	Dealer	Amount (INR 000s)
1	Tantea Dealer, Salem	274
2	Banglapadigai	89
3	Auroannam, Puducherry	58
4	Modern Store, Ooty	56
5	Arya Organic Food Store, Coimbatore	40
6	Bon Appetit, Puducherry	40
7	New Tantea Emporium, Ooty	34
8	Kriti, Puducherry	29
9	Thumbhithakadu, Assanur	26
10	Matha Amirthanandamayi Mutt, Coimbatore	24

NEW DEALERS

Kabini River Lodge, Kabini
OTR Organic Farm Products, Coimbatore
Tatsat, Delhi
SR Mala, Salem

**WAY FORWARD**

Going forward will be a challenge. Some of the areas where the maximum effort will take place: 1. Increasing focus on adding and expanding the category of food products - just begun the exercise in March and there is a whole range of suppliers that we have been put in touch with through Bhupi. It includes cereals & pulses, oils, spices, masalas, flakes & malts, sugar & jaggery, etc. We have started getting in touch with many of them and we hope that this will not only increase footfalls but also bring in people for repeat purchases. The prime reason we feel that as customers start making conscious choices about these products, they will also appreciate many of the other products available. The challenge is also to balance consistency of supply with prices as we don't want the products to be priced exorbitantly. 2. Fair Trade Retail Branding - through work with Fair Trade Forum - India, the exercise of launching and expanding an umbrella brand will gather steam and be implemented in the coming year. Between 10-20 shops run by FTF-I members will be included in this exercise and hopefully, we will be able to leverage not only the Fair Trade concepts but also the goodwill that these individual shops have built up over the years. The cross linkages and relationships built will surely be a huge spin off.



Training & Information

OBJECTIVE

Keystone has its own expertise in the field of conservation, livelihoods and enterprise. It has shared its knowledge to various stakeholders and outsiders in the form of trainings and information, be it on ecology, apiculture, organic farming, value addition of non timber forest produce, Forest Rights Act etc. Keystone personnel have been involved at the national, international and local level with NGOs and government institutions for imparting training and sharing of information.

ACTIVITIES

Information sharing

During the Save Western Ghats Meeting 2010, the Honourable Minister for Environment and Forests, Sh. Jairam Ramesh unveiled a map of the Western Ghats. The map was compiled as a reference/discussion point for the Save the Western Ghats meeting held on February 18-20, at the Keystone Foundation, Kotagiri, The Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu, India. Layers within the map include national, state and district boundaries, state capitals, major rivers,

major reservoirs, mining projects, major power plants, populations of tribal peoples, state legislative politics, national legislative politics, protected areas, NGOs, institutes and people's movements, and Western Ghats outline. A fly through of Western Ghats highlighting key issues in the region was also presented during the meeting using Google Earth.

The purpose of the map was to highlight the environmental threats faced by the Western Ghats, as well as the geopolitical and social influences on the area. It also illustrated the need to bring together information from various places and sources onto one platform that helps analysis while at the same time allows everyone to own, modify and share the data. For this purpose we have chosen to distribute the information as Google Earth files as they only require free Google Map or Google Earth for viewing and modification. This is in keeping with the spirit of openness of a people's movement. We thank Ashok Kundapur and Latha Anandha for contributing data for the map.

Volunteers

Maija Raudsepp, a volunteer from Canada, worked on compiling data and preparing the maps and fly-through.

Pomme Arros, also from Canada, scanned all the old publications of Keystone as well as articles about Keystone and uploaded them onto the Downloads Section of the Keystone Website.

Nobin Paul from Coonoor and Gary from Kotagiri, helped upload the data from the book 'Forest Plants of the Nilgiris' onto the website <http://opendata.keystone-foundation.org>.

Leah Cowan from England developed a concept note on 'Feed and Read' with Pratim.

Training

The main focus areas for which trainings were given are as follows

- Bee Keeping
- Organic farming and inputs
- Value addition of NTFP
- Sustainable harvesting practices of NTFP
- Forest Rights Act for indigenous communities, Forest Rights Committees and line departments
- Introduction to GIS & GPS
- Book Keeping and costing of products in the PCDs

Training programmes on beekeeping have been conducted for groups in different parts of the NBR as well as to groups outside including government institutions like the *Mahalir Thittam*.

Training on organic farming inputs like bin composting has been provided to farmers at Nilambur. Training on bio-inputs using leaves of various species, has been provided twice at Anaikatti, whereas Kurumbarpallam and Vazhithottam had one training each.

Trainings on Forest Rights Act were conducted for Forest Rights Committee (FRC) members and line departments in Kotagiri region for Aracode, Kunjapanai, Kodanad, Jackanarai and Kengarai panchayats involving around 65 persons and in Coonoor region for Burliar, Hulikal and Melur panchayats involving around 53 persons. In February 2011, there were trainings for line departments such as the Forest Department, Revenue department, Tribal Welfare Department, FRC members etc.

Twenty community members, from 6 districts of South Orissa, who are working on the Forests Rights Act process, were trained in the use of GPS and basic mapping tools. GPS training was given to Forest Department personnel at Sigur and Singara ranges. The participants were trained to measure boundaries for fencing to minimise human-wildlife conflict.

There were in-house training programmes for the Production Center members on value addition of non-timber forest produce, book keeping, costing of products, etc. Training programmes on soap making, cloth printing, fruit processing and mat weaving were imparted to the beneficiaries.





Administration & Finance

OBJECTIVES

The administration & Finance group works towards the following objectives

- To provide a transparent, responsive and decentralized administration system for all work units of Keystone.
- To support all the programme area groups with timely information on financial aspects so as to support the implementation of projects
- To meet all statutory requirements related to Income Tax, Foreign Contribution, Sales Tax etc.
- To conduct all financial transactions with transparency and consistent with prevalent standards

During the year, the focus of the group has been to support the organic evolution of two new organisational forms from the body of work of Keystone, namely the Last Forest Enterprises Pvt. Ltd. (LFE) and the Nilgiri Natural History Society (NNHS).

ACTIVITIES

LFE Formation

The most significant development from the point of view of this group during 2010 in Keystone was the formation of a Company to take over the activities of OMD. Following the decision of the Board of Trustees of Keystone, the next few months involved working closely with our auditors to complete all the required formalities to form the company and to begin transacting business. An unexpected delay in the issue of PAN Card resulted in the cascaded delay of a couple of months in opening of bank accounts.

This in turn delayed the installation of the EDC (Debit & Credit Cards swiping) machines. Although the company was registered on 29th June 2010, the business operations could only begin on 1st September 2010. To begin with only the Green Shop in Coonoor, Kotagiri and Ooty were brought under LFE. Till 31st March 2011, the Green Shop in Mysore operated under Keystone.

During 2009-10, a lot of effort went into implementing Tally Shoper 9 POS software in the shops and at hive. This along with the introduction of bar codes for all products helped control stocks better. This proved to be a boon when the goods were to be sold to LFE on 31st August 2010, as there was already a well established system of handling stocks at the Hive as well as the Green Shop.

The staff who were in OMD have all moved to LFE, rising to the challenge of nursing a new organisation in its infancy and ensuring it is able to stand on its own feet shortly. The salary and other benefits accruing to the staff of LFE have been kept on par with what they were getting in Keystone.

NNHS

Since Keystone is a Trust, the process of forming the NNHS was a good learning in terms of the procedures involved. The byelaws were evolved through internal discussion among some of the staff from Keystone with inputs from the advisors. The registration process went smoothly, but there was an inexplicable delay of more than six months in the opening of the bank accounts. We had to apply to a second bank and even that took the better part of three months. We have since then applied for registration under Sections 12(A) and 80(G) to enable donations to be exempt from Income Tax and to provide Income Tax benefits to donors respectively.

Credibility Alliance

As we try to improve internal management systems at all levels in Keystone, transparency and accountability become key criteria for judging the performance of the systems. While there are systems in place for information sharing within the

organisation that ensure these values, it is also invaluable to have an external/third party validation of the systems of management and governance. The Credibility Alliance (<http://www.credall.org>) is a well known third party accreditor in India.

Last year we had initiated the process of getting accredited by Credall. The process requires resources both in terms of sending an extensive set of documents and also in terms of paying for the costs incurred in the review conducted by reviewers chosen by Credall. The process took over an year and we have been granted provisional accreditation for desirable norms for one year. The only requirement we have not met yet is regarding the annual report, since we have been following the calendar year in the past. In order to comply with this norm, we have moved to a calendar year cycle for annual reports starting with this one. With the publication of the annual report for 2010-2011 in July, Credibility Alliance would extend the accreditation for a further four year period.

GiveIndia and Samhita.org

The global recession has had a significant impact on funding available for NGOs like Keystone through the traditional institutional sources. At the same time, there is an increasing trend of individual donors in the country reaching out to NGOs through various online platforms. In this situation, strategically we



have moved to diversify our funding base further by tapping the online individual donors. Rather than opting for adding a donation option through Paypal or a similar service on our website which would have meant that we would also have to spend resources for promoting it among potential donors, we have opted to sign up with third party online donation platforms <http://giveindia.org> and <http://samhita.org>. These platforms have provisions for defining specific activities for which funding is needed and they also run promotional campaigns from time to time. GiveIndia also has provisions for donations to general and corpus funds. During 2010-11, we have raised a total donation of INR 1.5 Lakhs from these platforms.

CordAid supported Financial Management Workshop

The NTFP Exchange Programme India (NTFP-EP India) network has been working together and implementing the CordAid funded projects over the decade. In the third phase of the project that began in June 2010, there were two add-on components related to strengthening the financial management systems among the partners and strengthening the economic mindset in the enterprise development activities among the partners. Keystone has organised workshops of accounts and programme staff on these aspects in 2010 at Kotagiri. The mutual sharing among the partners has been invaluable in improving the systems among all the partners. Easwar and Bala visited Prakruti, Sirsi to review their systems and to suggest improvements. There has been a significant improvement in the reporting of progress in the third phase of the project among the partners.

Audit by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT)

An audit of the financials related to the SDTT project along with the overall systems and procedures was conducted by Ms. Rozmeen Surani. The observations and inputs to improving the financial systems have been incorporated into the existing systems.

ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE YEAR

Accreditation by Credibility Alliance for desired norms.

Diversification of funding options through GiveIndia and Samhita.

Various changes to the staff policy and rules over the years were consolidated and updated.

Byelaws for NNHS were evolved according to the provisions of the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and the Society registered.

Registration of LFE and completion of all the formalities required to begin operations.

The Save The Western Ghats Annual Meet was held in Kotagiri with over 300 participants over three days.

IMPACT FACTORS

During the year, three members of the group were on maternity/paternity leave and despite these disruptions the day to day activities were carried out smoothly with understanding and cooperation from other colleagues.

The norms set out by Credibility Alliance have provided a lens with which to view our systems and procedures and tweak them as needed. The only major change needed has been the annual report cycle as mentioned earlier.

With the formation of LFE and NNHS, there is a diversification in the work in terms of the statutory requirements of a Private Limited Company and

The annual meeting of the Save the Western Ghats Movement held at the Keystone Campus in Kotagiri was a great success. Keystone hosted more than 300 participants from different parts of the country, including the honourable Minister of State for Environment and Forests, Sh. Jairam Ramesh. The event required months of planning as Kotagiri has limited facilities to handle such gatherings. It was a team effort with all the staff working together in a coordinated manner to ensure that the meeting went off smoothly. The success of this meeting has certainly given us the confidence that we can handle events of such magnitude well.

Society in addition to that of the Trust. This is an opportunity for the group members to learn new things and support these institutions effectively and efficiently.

WAY FORWARD

By and large, systems in administration and finance have been streamlined. With the review by Credibility Alliance, there is also an external endorsement. There is a need to streamline systems in LFE, for which administration and finance support is being done by this group. Overall, attempts would be made to reduce administrative costs through innovative measures.

NETWORKS, MEETINGS, VISITS, TRAININGS, LEARNINGS

Easwar and Bala visited Prakruti, Sirsi to review their financial management systems as part of the CordAid supported project. Bala attended a training programme on Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction organised by CordAid.

Foreign Contribution

To receive grants from foreign donors, Keystone is registered under the FCRA Act vide Registration no.075970103. It is mandatory under the FCRA Act to maintain separate accounts for foreign contribution. The total foreign contribution received during the year was INR 1,60,40,587 with the major donors being CordAid, CEPF, Both Ends, IUCN and Toyota Foundation.

The Primary FCRA bank account is with Standard Chartered Bank, Coimbatore and subsidiary accounts are with Syndicate Bank, Kotagiri; Axis Bank, Ooty and Central Bank, Jagdalpur and Kotagiri.

Organic Market Development

Keystone promotes marketing of organic, fair trade and Tribal products through retail shops popularly known as Green Shop and wholesale marketing to other retailers is done from the Hive. Keystone is registered under the VAT Act (2005) vide No. 33962560660, dtd. 01/01/2007 and for interstate

sales it is registered under the CST Act (1956) vide No. 342465, dtd. 16/07/1996. The total turnover during the financial year 2010-11 in OMD totals to INR 7,273,296.58 which is detailed below

VAT Sales – INR 66,30,521.15

CST Sales – INR 2,03,194.16

Sales Returns – INR 1,95,553.92

During the year 2010-11 tax collected and paid are as detailed below

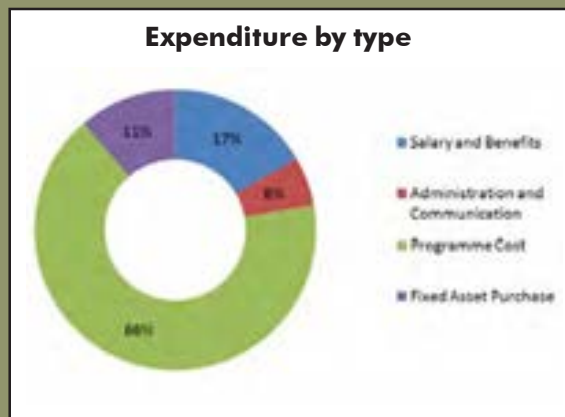
VAT - INR 2,57,278

CST - INR 6,454

Rupee Contribution

This account deals with the local donations received. Donations to Keystone Foundation are exempt under Section 80(G) of the Income Tax Act. During the year 2010-11, the biggest local contribution is from Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai for the Eco-interventions with Forest Gatherers Project. During the financial year 2010-11 the total receipts of RC was INR 24,46,981.

Rupee contribution also deals with the Srikanth Joshi Endowment Fund under which we support upcoming NGOs and provide scholarships for students. The fund continues to support small, diverse and interesting initiatives. During 2010-11, Total donation received was INR 1,50,000, while Interests and dividends yielded INR 91,154.



CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AS ON 31.03.2011

No	Particulars	2010-11 Amount INR 000	2009-10 Amount INR 000
1	LIABILITIES		
	Capital Fund	27,708	32,435
	Endowment and Other Funds	15,861	17,183
	Current Liabilities	1,604	2,065
		45,173	51,684
2	ASSETS		
	Fixed Assets	11,942	10,100
	Investments	7,201	11,822
	Current Assets	26,030	29,762
		45,173	51,864

CONSOLIDATED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31.03.2011

No	Particulars	2010-11 Amount INR 000	2009-10 Amount INR 000
1.	INCOME		
	Donation		
	-Foreign Institutional Donors	16,041	20,590
	-Indian Institutional Donors	1,935	2,363
	- Others	512	471
	Income from Organic Market Development	7,273	7,182
	Other Income	1,032	1,689
		26,793	32,295
2.	EXPENDITURE		
	Village Development Projects	22,758	24,296
	Organic Market Development- Expenses	5,055	6,566
	Other Expenses	148	163
	Purchase of Fixed Asset	3,571	1,827
		31,533	32,852
3.	SURPLUS FUNDS	(4,740)	(557)

INFORMATION BASED ON NORMS OF CREDIBILITY ALLIANCE AND GIVE INDIA

1. Distribution of Staff based on salary levels

Slab of gross salary (in INR) plus benefits paid to staff (per month)	No. of male staff	No. of female staff	Total Number of Staff
Less than 5,000	6	1	7
5,000 - 10,000	12	1	13
10,000 - 25,000	7	3	10
25,000 - 50,000	2	1	3
50,000 - 1,00,000	0	0	0
Greater than 1,00,000	0	0	0
Total	27	6	33

2. PAYMENTS MADE TO CONSULTANTS DURING 2010 - 2011

Total annual payments made to consultants (In INR)	Number of Consultants
Less than 5000	0
5,000 - 10,000	0
10,000 - 25,000	4
25,000 - 50,000	1
50,000 - 1,00,000	2
Greater than 1,00,000	2
Total	9

3. STAFF REMUNERATION [GROSS YEARLY + BENEFITS] IN RUPEES

Head of the Organization (including honorarium)	: INR 347,484 per year (3 persons)
Highest paid full time regular staff	: INR 347,484 per year
Lowest paid full time regular staff	: INR 55,104 per year

4. TOTAL COST OF INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL BY BOARD MEMBERS/STAFF/VOLUNTEERS ON BEHALF OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR 2010 - 2011

Name of Staff	Designation	Destination	Purpose of Travel	Cost Incurred (INR 000s)	Sponsored
Mathew John	Director	Sri Lanka	Future Earth Network Meeting	11.14 (Only local travel paid by Keystone)	Yes
Mathew John	Director	Italy	Slow Food Meeting	Nil	Yes
Snehlata Nath	Director	Phillipines	NTFP-EP Network Meeting (Two trips)	208.86 (Fully reimbursed)	Yes
Pratim Roy	Director	Geneva	UNEP Meeting	98.53 (Fully reimbursed)	Yes
Robert Leo	Programme Coordinator	Sri Lanka	Agri Expoure Visit	Nil	Yes
Robert Leo	Programme Coordinator	Vietnam	Seminar on Beekeeping and marketing of Honey	71.05	Yes (Partial)
Sumin George Thomas	Additional Coordinator	UK	Education (Short Course)	49.13	Yes

5. THE TOTAL COST OF NATIONAL TRAVEL BY BOARD MEMBERS/STAFF/VOLUNTEERS ON BEHALF OF ORGANISATION FOR 2010 - 2011 (THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE LOCAL CONVEYANCE) INR 449,329

6. Annual Gross remuneration paid to members of the Board of Trustees

No.	Name	Remuneration paid in 2010-11 f (INR 000s)
1	Somnath Sen	0
2	Anju Sharma	0
3	Shipra Gupta	0
4	Rita Banerji ***	35.40
5	John Kurien	0
6	Suprava Patnaik	0
7	P.K. Mulley	0
8	Meena Gupta	0

*** Ms. Rita Banerji was paid for consultancy services in the production of a film. It was not in her role as trustee.

7. AMOUNT REIMBURSED TO ALL BOARD MEMBERS IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2010 - 2011 FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

No.	Head	Amount (INR 000s)
1	International Travel	0
2	Domestic Travel ***	45.32
3	Local Conveyance	0
4	Entertainment Expenses	0
5	Others (Food)	0

*** Reimbursed for meetings related to projects and not the meeting of the Board of Trustees

8. PROFILE OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Location	Occupation	Position in the Board
1	Somnath Sen	47	Male	New Delhi	Consultant	Managing Trustee
2	Suprava Patnaik	50	Female	New Delhi	Professor	Trustee
3	Shipra Gupta	76	Female	Puducherry	Educationist	Trustee
4	Rita Banerji	42	Female	New Delhi	Film maker	Trustee
5	Meena Gupta	63	Female	Kolkata	Retd. Secy to Govt of India	Trustee
6	Rev. PK Mulley	64	Male	Coonoor	Presbyter	Trustee
7	Anju Sharma	41	Female	UK	Consultant	Trustee
8	John Kurien	60	Male	Tiruvananthapuram	Consultant	Trustee



Networks

NTFP EXCHANGE PROGRAMME – REGIONAL & INDIA

The year began in the NTFP network with a lot of preparation as some members were involved in the preparation for the Save Western Ghats Meeting. Co-ordinated by Keystone, preparations were ongoing with Pandu, Latha, Paul and others to decide its agenda and strategy.

The partners of the NTFP-EP in India prepared papers for the joint publication entitled, 'Indigenous People & Forests in India: View from a Network' which covered the themes and issues of concern for this group. Broadly related to conservation, indigenous knowledge, livelihood, Forest Rights Act – this publication gives an overview of what the network does.

The specific allocation of 'Desks' to three organisations had effective results – Fibre Desk with Prakruti held meetings and workshops bringing together resource people and weavers to make new and traditional products. The Advocacy desk, held its meeting on FRA and related issues in July and contributed its recommendations to the National

Committee on Forest Rights Act. The Honey desk at Keystone, also held a partners' training and got honey tested for nutritional composition and antibiotics from an authorised laboratory.

Nurseries and planting is another area of work the network strives to undertake. Madhu Ramnath, the co-ordinator of the network organised seed exchanges and information on plants/seed availability across the partners. A training workshop was also held by Palni Hills Conservation Council for the EP partners. Across the regional network, the strategy planning exercise took place. There were eight papers presented on different topics and each helped to build the programme for the future, with comments and inputs from the participants. More emphasis was placed on subsistence and conservation, which needed to be taken up as a focus area in the future.

Exchange of expertise across the region became real, when two people from Nui Chua National Park in South Vietnam spent 2 months in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, saw the eco-development

initiatives of Keystone and met with different role players who could share their experience in protected area management.

A meeting on Eco-certification of NTFPs was also organised by Keystone Foundation, in which many network partners participated, especially those working on marketing. This tied up with the National process initiated by Ministry of Environment and Forests and being undertaken by Indian Institute of Forest Management. Experiments based on Fairwild Certification, were also represented. The meeting recommended different organisations to take up this process with the NTFPs they work with.

The network met in November in the premises of Maharashtra Arogya Mandal near Bhimashankar Sanctuary in Maharashtra. The meeting focused on the topic of Community-based Conservation. Besides the partners, who shared both concepts and findings from the field, the meeting was attended by Archana Godbole of Applied Ecological Research Foundation – who talked about her work on sacred groves and the challenges of working with the communities in Northern Western Ghats.

As an overall capacity building for partners – a meeting on building an economic mindset, enterprise development and financial management was held at Keystone. This was to ensure real benefits to the community and foolproof and transparent financial management.

In the coming year, the network plans to increase its interactions and learning agenda. It will develop course material for barefoot ecologists and hold trainings for the community members across the network. It also aims to put together laws related to indigenous communities and forest conservation, which will help to develop para-legal expertise across the region.

SAVE WESTERN GHATS MOVEMENT

To be part of the SWGM Core Group is an experience, because it is a dynamic process and has almost no structure or organization. It has been

founded on the principle of a people's movement for environmental regeneration and people's rights and livelihoods in the Western Ghats.

Save Western Ghats Meet 2010

The meet was held at the Keystone campus in Kotagiri from the 18th to 20th February 2010. It started off with the Union Minister for Environment and Forest Mr. Jairam Ramesh as the guest of Honour. In response to the various presentations on the issues and challenges facing the Western Ghats today the Honourable Minister announced the setting up of the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel. The panel would work towards demarcating all ecologically sensitive areas across 51 districts in the six states with the aim to identify areas in which no further development activities would be undertaken and those in which permission would be based on strict criteria. The Hon. Minister also inaugurated the Nilgiri Natural History Society.



There were group discussion on issues such as Saving Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, Large Dams and Thermal Power Plants, Bring Western Ghats into NAPCC, Issues of Indigenous People, Human-Wildlife Conflict, GM and Organic Farming and Mining.

There was also a slot where people could offer a session and others were free to join any of them. The session topics on offer were

- How to make save western ghats sexier and romantic
- Working with energy system and intelligence of nature
- Education delearning

- Outreach
- Development and media

Discussions were held on those topics in the teams and many formed groups for future work.

A Nilgiris declaration was released on the final day (See box), followed by a march through Kotagiri town. The march ended with a talk by members from the group representing the states of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra in Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil and Marathi respectively, urging the citizens to join in and take the movement forward.

NILGIRI DECLARATION

We, the Save Western Ghats Movement, with a long history of existence since the last 23 years in our recent conclave on 18 – 20 Feb 2010 at Kotagiri in Nilgiris, wish to acknowledge and appreciate the pro-active and supportive role of the Ministry of Environment of Forests. The deliberations affirmed the dire need for a larger commitment, resolve and action to save this ecologically sensitive landscape. We hereby declare that the Government of India and State Governments of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala act immediately on the following:

- *The nature's laboratory in this part of the hemisphere is in urgent need of a sensitive, compassionate and central but representative authority to oversee ecological growth and development. The Save Western Ghats movement recommends creation of a Western Ghats Ecological Authority (WGEA).*
- *The role of forests of Western Ghats in sequestering carbon has been established. Its strategic role in climate management needs to be given a fillip through its inclusion as one of the missions under the National Mission under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC).*
- *The policy and legal framework need to be supportive of conservation in the Western Ghats. The provisions under the proposed National Biotechnology Regulatory Authority and the National Green Tribunal need to be adopted only after engaging with the public at large and with stakeholders in particular.*
- *UNESCO's declaration of the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve in 1986 has remained on paper. This unique recognition needs to be legalized and a proper mechanism of functioning amongst the three state government viz., Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, should be in place at the earliest.*
- *The intentions of the state in preserving the biodiversity of the Western Ghats need to have a demonstrative effect. The State should seize this opportunity to stop all new mining leases across the Western Ghats and consider alternatives to the large thermal and hydropower projects.*

20 February 2010, Kotagiri, Nilgiris



Expansion of the Core Group

Save Western Ghats Movement revival can be traced back to Pandu and Sudhirendar's discovery of what had happened to the movement and what was the current situation. The insights led to two new publications which brought the issue of the Western Ghats back on the centre-stage.

The Save Western Ghats March which started more than 25 years ago as one of the pioneering civil society movements to redefine, question and build up a grassroots up swell for conservation, protection of natural resources and people's local livelihoods went into a slumber after those heady, activist days.

A handful of people (Pandu, Latha, and Sudhirendar) made it a point to start again, to reignite. Kumar Kalanand Mani from Peaceful Society who was one of the pioneers of the March offered graciously to host the Goa meeting in 2009. In Goa 2009 – this happened in an organic and amazing way – so there was a concerted decision that this should not be lost again and Keystone, Kotagiri was suggested (by BJ Krishnan) as a venue which is in the heart of the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve in the Western Ghats.

At the end of the Goa Meeting a core group was naturally formed to take the movement forward and

also plan for the next one in Kotagiri. At that time, the core members were Pandu, Sudhirendar, Latha, Archana, BJ Krishnan, Madhu Ramnath, and Pratim.

Over time Carmen & Kalanand got added and Madhu Ramnath resigned almost after a week as he felt he could not devote time and effort to this. Two meetings of the Core Group in parts happened, one in Kotagiri May 2009 (Sudhirendar, BJ, Latha, Archana, Pandu, Pratim) and one in Goa in Sept 2009 (Pandu, Kalanand, Sudhirendar, Carmen, Archana).

We realized after the Kotagiri meeting there is a need to handle issues at all levels and in different sectors. We need to broad base the Core group so that it reflects age groups, geographical spread, expertise and experience, cross-cutting sector, etc. Hence we proposed the following additional names - Somnath Sen - Strategic Planning, Advocacy and Facilitator; Hartman de Souza - Theatre, Children & Youth Issues; Anitha Sharma - Environment Education, Children and Youth Issues; Ritwick Dutta - Legal & Advocacy; Gowrishankar - Biodiversity; Amrita Kurane - Working on Mining Impacts, Restoration of Mines and Ecotourism in Northern Western Ghats; Suprabha Seshan - Biodiversity, Research.

The core group is a loosely knit group managing to bring groups and people together, but we are not interested in formalizing that into an institution. The core team members are passionate and committed about the Western Ghats. Each one has specific interests with lot of leadership qualities. As and when required, we have contributed to the process. Most importantly the inputs and involvement is voluntary.

The best thing thus far in the group has been spontaneity, camaraderie, responsiveness, mutuality, and initiative and comfortability. Though we have worked on an agenda and tasks, the response has been voluntary. Within the core, there have been 'mini core groups' wherein two or more have grouped together to pursue something with others being supportive. Though there have been no guidelines but for some unwritten norms. Our sense is that each one has been aiming at a goal though the routes to reach it have been different. Let that be!

In the course of time from Feb 2010 to Mar 2011, there have been several changes and developments:

1. Core Group Meetings in Goa, May 2010; Waynad & Delhi, August 2010, Soans Islands, Mangalore, December 2010 and Moodbidri, March 2011. Detailed minutes of these meetings are available for reference. The salient points and features have been:
 - a. Discussions on the broader Western Ghats Political Economy
 - b. Need for going beyond "The Save Western Ghats" paradigm
 - c. Roles and responsibilities and institutional arrangements of any of Core Group Members
 - d. Our response and relations with MoEF created the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP)
 - e. From large meetings / gatherings – Goa 2009, Kotagiri 2010 and Moodbidri 2011, we decided to concentrate on specific thematic issues and focused strategies.
- f. There have been Youth leadership meetings, Thrissur, March 2011, Face to Face with WGEEP, March 2011, Downstream Impacts Workshop, May 2011 and KILA Local Governance Workshop, May 2011 with WGEEP.
- g. From the Core Group of 14 persons, several people have not been so active and some have asked to be relieved due to other engagements and conflict of interests and philosophies. Thus the Core Group now consists of Sudhirendar Sharma, Pandurang Hegde, A Latha, Archana Godbole, Carmen Miranda, Pratim Roy, Somnath Sen, Anitha Sharma, Ritwick Dutta and Suprabha Seshan
2. This year we plan an Ecotourism workshop at Sirsi (September 2011) and the Goa workshop (September 2011). The final big gathering celebrating 25 years of the movement will be at Northern Western Ghats organized by AERF, Pune.
3. We await the final report of the WGEEP (Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel) and the constitution of the WGEA (Western Ghats Ecology Authority). The 51 districts spread over six states of the Western Ghats will be given Ecologically Sensitive Area rankings in terms of eco-sensitivity and priority for conservation.





PARTICIPATORY GUARANTEE SYSTEMS (PGS)

The system has continued to gain popularity over the past year. Initially, it seemed that the NGO world and the government might remain at differing view points but to its tremendous credit, the government of India has seen the kind of impact this system can create and moved forward quite rapidly. The government created a PGS-India platform which was created through the National Centre for Organic Farming (NCOF), based in Ghaziabad. Led by its Director, Dr. A K Yadav, there were three consultations based in Pune, Bangalore and Delhi. Fruitful and engaging discussions at each of the venues, with inputs from IFOAM too, have now come out with a notification which is more or less along the same lines as the PGS Organic Council.

The PGS OC (PGSOC), formerly called the PGS Organic India Council, had to rename itself as new registration conditions do not allow the word 'India' to be used in the name of any institution. After repeated attempts to register PGSOC, the registration did finally take place in Mapusa, Goa.

During the past year, the Council meetings have taken place in Ranikhet (March 2010) and Wardha (September 2010), hosted by Grassroots and Chetana Vikas, respectively. It was a good opportunity to also see the entrepreneurial activities of Umang (the producer co. supported by Grassroots) and how it is growing. It was a learning experience to see the work done in organic agriculture by Chetana Vikas.

The newsletter of the PGS OC has been a regular feature and eagerly awaited everywhere. Issues of April and November 2010 were well received. The April issue had articles on KAPAS, the organic cotton project of CCD. The November issue also had impressions from the PGS meeting in Terra Madre. Experiments in Pune by Gomukh on direct marketing of vegetables and in Goa by the Chorao Farmers of mangoes were interesting articles.

LEHO (The Ladakh Environment and Health Organization) organized a seminar in Leh. Unprecedented response led to a very lively exchange of ideas, with over 60 delegates from different villages, NGOs, government officials, etc. Joy, Miguel and Samraj formed the resource team. Other PGS meetings were organized in Erode (Miguel & Leo) and Kumbakonam (Moorthy). The Samdrup Jongkhar Initiative (SJI) was launched last year by the Prime Minister of Bhutan – OFAI was invited to promote organic agriculture and PGS.

The PGS Committee of IFOAM held its first meeting (after being constituted in Aug 2009) in the beautiful city of Thimphu, Bhutan. Previously, functioned as an IFOAM Task Force from 2004 till 2009. The meeting was followed by a 2 day workshop with the Government of Bhutan.





FAIR TRADE

The journey in Fair Trade has been an exciting one as a retail branding strategy road map was laid out for Fair Trade member shops. This has been some time in the making but being part of a working group has helped in pushing this agenda forward. The advantages in leveraging on other Fair Trade members' goodwill built over the years as well as the larger brand of 'Fair Trade' across the world, has many advantages.

Mathew has dropped out of the Fair Trade Forum - India (FTF-I) Executive Board but continues to play an active role in many spheres of FTF-I's activities. He had an opportunity to share about PGS in the Annual General Body meeting in Kerala as well as to place the idea of umbrella branding of retail shops to the gathering.

Creative Handicrafts, headed by Johny Joseph, celebrated its 25 years of existence, working with the women of the slums in Mumbai, with a grand

conference. It was an opportunity to meet many other groups and what was different was that the meeting was organised around themes that had speakers from various backgrounds who challenged some of the ideas. This made for lively debates and infused fresh thinking for many of the delegates.

TERRA MADRE

A meeting or a network of food communities from around the world. A simplicity of expression but the enormity of the earth's complexity in terms of its people and their diversity on display. It takes one's breath away. The sheer enormity of the exercise of bringing close to 6000 people from around the world, on a common platform which gives people space to express themselves and meet people from other diverse backgrounds. I think that is what makes Terra Madre unique. It does not try and create boundaries but allows people to find and channelize energy from one another for the earth's common good.

While sitting at Mumbai airport, on my way back from Terra Madre 2010, waiting for my onward connection, I realized that it had been quite an experience – refreshing and reinvigorating. For those who have never been there, would suggest that at least one visit should be made, if the opportunity arises. The energy that goes through the place is amazing and one comes away with such a feeling of optimism and hope. Very difficult to describe but for those 6000 folks who spent those days together, they will testify to this. The kind of volunteer effort that is channelized into this effort - apart from the support to the TM, so many hundreds of us were housed in individual homes with families that opened their homes without any qualms - picking up, dropping and showing us around Turin, all of this with such an open heart and smile... Asked to indicate a choice while filling up the registration form, I chose 'stay with a family'. There was still an amount of hesitation when I landed but the way I was made to feel at home, made me realize that I would not trade this experience for any hotel, any day.

Coming back to the PGS workshop, it was quite a surprise to be hauled out of the crowd and told that within a few minutes, I would have to speak about the experience in India – it gave me an opportunity to go back in time and provide a background to the PGS movement in different parts of the world. How circumstances encouraged people to create their own spaces and yet make a statement that there was a huge population of people out there who made up the organic movement. I then explained about the manner in which PGS evolved in India – farmers reaching out to consumers in ways that they had not

connected before. For consumers, a new paradigm in today's world where the producer was able to explain his/her issues. A connect which left both sides feeling happy and contented. I then ended with the effort being made by the government to launch an PGS India - I think it was quite well received as this session went on for close to 3 hours with no signs of ending - so many people from around the world talked of their efforts and the tremendous strength that they have gotten from this concept of PGS -many of them had heard about it and many were hearing about it for the first time and were so excited. Andrea, from the Italian Organic Association, was chairing this session and I was amazed at his patience in allowing one and all to have their say. Thankfully, I was carrying the Indian PGS newsletter – PGS Organic News (Mar 10 issue) and there was such a scramble for them.

Something else to be appreciated was the simultaneous translation into over half a dozen languages – 8 parallel sessions and so many others. It allowed people to comfortably slip into the language of choice and be a part immediately.

Alice Veron from Certified Naturally Grown, USA was there, as was Thilak from Sri Lanka. It was great to hear that the effort made at the end of last year (Dec 2010) when a few of us visited Sri Lanka through IFOAM, has moved forward. Close to a dozen groups have formed in Sri Lanka since our visit last year and there has been quite a movement there with a University throwing open its doors to house a small office and provide any required support. Detailed reports are available in the PGS Organic India website www.pgsorganic.in.

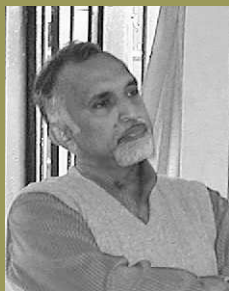


www.fairtradeforum.org
www.wtfo.com
www.pgsorganic.in
www.ifoam.org

Trustees



Anju Sharma



John Kurien



Meena Gupta



Rev. Philip Mulley



Rita Banerji



Shipra Gupta



Somnath Sen



Suprava Patnaik

Advisor

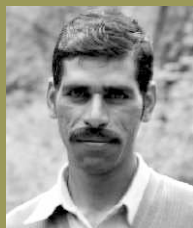


C.L.Gupta
Technical Advisor

Staff



Anita
Programme Coordinator
Conservation
With Keystone for 9 years



Aradukuttan
Assistant
Nursery
With Keystone for 5 years



Archana
Programme Coordinator
Environmental Governance
With Keystone for 2 years



Ayyasamy
Assistant
Beekeeping
With Keystone for 4 years



Balachander
Programme Coordinator
Administration and Finance
With Keystone for 2 years



Chandran M
Area Manager
Konavakarai
With Keystone for 12 years



Chandran P.
Subject Manager
Environmental Governance
With Keystone for 12 years



Eswaran
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Finance
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Hari
Assistant
Campus Security
With Keystone for 8 years



Justinraj
Area Manager
Sigur
With Keystone for 12 years



Lalitha
Assistant
Water Resources
With Keystone for 3 years



Leo
Programme Coordinator
Livelihoods
With Keystone since inception



Mahadesh
Area Manager
Punanjanur
With Keystone for 5 years



Mallikarjunamoorthy
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Livelihoods
With Keystone for 9 years



Mathew
Director
Administration and Finance
With Keystone since inception



Murugaian
Assistant
Livelihoods
With Keystone for 3 years

Staff

**Pratim**

Director - Donors, Networking and
Organisational Development
With Keystone since inception

**Rajendran L.**

Area Manager
Coonor
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**Rajendran R.**

Assistant
Beekeeping
With Keystone for 4 years

**Ramachandran**

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Nilambur
With Keystone for 3 years

**Rangasamy**

Area Manager
Assanur
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**Sakthivel**

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**Samraj**

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**Saneesh**

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Conservation Education
With Keystone for 5 years

**Sarasasmeeta**

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Administration
With Keystone for 8 years

**Selvi**

Additional Coordinator
Culture and People
With Keystone for 8 years

**Senthil Prasad**

Additional Coordinator
Training and Information
With Keystone for 9 years

**Sivagami**

Assistant - Accounts
With Keystone for 4 years

**Sivakumar**

Accountant - PCD
With Keystone for 2 years

**Sneha**

Director
Programmes
With Keystone since inception

**Subramani**

Assistant
Culture and People
With Keystone for 5 years

**Sudhakar K.**

Area Manager
Pillur
With Keystone for 3 years

**Sumin**

Additional Coordinator
Conservation
With Keystone for 5 years

**Vasu**

Supervisor
Campus
With Keystone for 9 years

People who have moved on to Last Forest Enterprises



Karnagopal
With Keystone for 4 years



Khadka
With Keystone for 4 years



Mala
With Keystone for 5 years



Miller
With Keystone for 16 years



Monica
With Keystone for 2 years



Prabhu
With Keystone for 2 years



Sheeba
With Keystone for 2 years



Shoba
With Keystone for 1 year



Sonia
With Keystone for 2 years



Sudhakar T.
With Keystone for 2 years



Suganthi P.K.
With Keystone for 4 years



Suganthi T
With Keystone for 9 years



Thetan
With Keystone for 4 years

People who have moved on . . .



Pushpinder



Rasingam



Samita



Sivaraj



Vellaiyan



Susheela



Calendar of Events – Jan 2010 to Mar 2011

JANUARY 2010

1. The Shola Fellowship at Vembanad Lake, Kerala “Shola Backwaters”
2. Preparations & Coordination for Save Western Ghats Movement (SWGGM) meeting
3. Gouthami’s visit for Keystone Impact Assessment (15 years)
4. Enviro-legal thesis on Biodiversity & Indigenous People for UNEP Env. Diplomacy
5. SDTT Audit
6. Pratim & Sneh to Murshidabad to see Shabnam’s NGO – Street Survivors India and Jagriti Public School
7. Mathew to Bhutan for IFOAM PGS Comm meeting & workshop on PGS with Bhutanese Government
8. Mathew to Future Earth International network meeting at Trichy
9. Future Earth Field Visit
4. Jack Tordoff, CEPF and team from ATREE at Keystone
5. Bharat Krishnan and R. Gouthami finalize the Impact Assessment Report of Keystone
6. Results Based Management Systems - workshop by Bharat in Coonoor
7. Valla and group from Sweden visit Keystone

MARCH 2010

1. Board of Trustees Meeting: Meena Gupta, IAS, Retd. formerly Secretary MoEF and Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India joins Keystone Foundation Board
2. BJ Krishnan becomes a member of the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel of MoEF
3. BARCIK team from Bangladesh on training on value addition of hive products
4. Gautham Sarang visits Keystone to work on Last Forest Website (<http://lastforest.in>)
5. Mathew for PGS Organic India Council meeting in Ranikhet
6. Dr. Lalitha from Porgai, Sittilingi visiting Keystone
7. Sneh & Sam to Nilambur to visit Ayurvedic Cooperative Society

FEBRUARY 2010

1. Rainforest Alliance & Keystone Foundation workshop with partners on Certification
2. Pratim for CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Management Programme Authority) Tamil Nadu – first dialogue with Chief Secretary at Chennai
3. Hon. Minister Jairam Ramesh at Kotagiri for the SWGM. Meets Keystone team at Campus and goes through all the building and activities; launches the Western Ghats Ecology Authority and releases the Nilgiri Natural History Society (NNHS)

APRIL 2010

1. Anita’s plan for PhD and discussion on Conservation Group direction
2. Support to IUCN Netherlands on why Ecosystems Grant Project (EGP) is crucial to India
3. Bhoomi Pooja for Adivasi Resource Centre
4. Sneh to Sirsi, Belgaum and Hubli

5. Pratim to Delhi for DFID Livelihoods Conference
6. Samita's Ph.D. plan, discussions and future steps
7. Sam to Chennai to meet SAIL management for CSR Initiative

MAY 2010

1. WGEEP at BSI, Coimbatore – Pratim invited to present Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESA) criteria and views from the field
2. Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve Information Centre inaugurated by Collector of the Nilgiris, Ms. Archana Patnaik, IAS at Bee Museum
3. SWGM Core Group Meeting at Goa
4. Students from Foundation for Liberal and Management Education (FLAME), Pune visit Keystone
5. 85 tribal students who have passed Class XII are at Keystone for counselling
6. Health Counselling for indigenous community women by Dr. Sujatha from Coonoor
7. Kanmani Venkateshwaran, a student intern, makes a presentation on her work on Carbon Sequestration in NBR sites
8. Rajesh Ramakrishnan, Shailesh Nagar from Natural Resources Management Consultants Private Limited, New Delhi for a scoping mission with Keystone to explore ESPA opportunity and joint project proposal – Sigur, Nilambur and Kotagiri
9. Tree Fall Gap version 3.0: Discussion Groups I & II: Village Coordinators & Area and Subject Managers
7. Eric Toumeret, French bee photographer and film maker at Keystone to make a film
8. Sumin and Saneesh to Delhi for training on film making

JUNE 2010

1. 225 children from Green Valley School, Vishwa Shanti Matriculation School and Home School participate in the World Environment Day celebrations. 190 shola trees planted to revive Happy Valley wetland
2. Meera Nair & Vinay, Consultants from CordAid visit Keystone
3. Tree Fall Gap version 3.0 – Inputs and discussions from Management Group
4. Student Conference on Conservation Science, Bangalore
5. Seemai (Boundary) hubba at Kotagiri. Village Conservation Awards presented.
6. Meera from Care-India visits Keystone
7. Students from Hebron School visit Keystone
8. Ramachandran, Rangaswamy and Thethan to Bangalore - Training on Livelihood Promotion
9. Mathew participates in Brainstorm on PGS Fair Trade at IIC, New Delhi
10. Mathew & Sneh to Bangalore visiting Shristi School of Design teachers

JULY 2010

1. Samita Vasudevan leaves Keystone to pursue PhD at Centre for the Study of Community & Society, Bangalore, topic being "Gender-based Thinking / Approach with Indigenous Communities"
2. Rainforest Alliance & NCF meet on "Sustainable Indicators for Tea" at Sullivan Court
3. Planning for the Indigenous Day celebrations on 9th Aug 2010 at Ooty
4. Mridula from *Swadesh Ki Khoj*, joins Keystone for a year
5. Anita goes on a sabbatical for doing her Ph.D after eight years of service in Keystone

AUGUST 2010

1. Credibility Alliance application review visit by Mr. Jeypaul, Namakkal and Mr. Shankaranarayanan, Coimbatore
2. World Indigenous Day Celebrations & Year of Biodiversity at Ooty, Collector Archana Patnaik, IAS inaugurates and Khadi Minister, Ramchandran is Chief Guest
3. Mathew to Sri Lanka for Future Earth Meeting
4. Core Group Meeting SWGM Waynad, Kerala
5. Core Group Meeting SWGM, Delhi
6. Last Forest Enterprise (LFE) – formal dinner and announcement with staff who have resigned from Keystone Foundation and joined LFE
7. Team from Outlook Business Magazine visit Keystone
8. The Collector of the Nilgiris, Ms. Archana Patnaik, visited Keystone
9. Financial Management Workshop for network partners in the CordAid funded project

SEPTEMBER 2010

1. LFE starts operations on 1st September 2010.
2. Bhoomi Puja of Honey & Coffee Building at Keystone campus
3. Sneha to Orchha, Bastar and Delhi
4. Visit by CK Sreedharan, member of MoTA-MoEF FRA Committee
5. MJ for Fair Trade Forum - India AGM at Kochi
6. MJ for PGS Organic India Council meeting at Wardha

OCTOBER 2010

1. Care India – Ethical Tea Partnership Study begins
2. Pratim to Geneva for UNEP Civil Society Meeting, invited as resource person for indigenous people
3. Mathew to Italy for Terra Madre Meet
4. Third Conservation Education Network Meeting at Keystone
5. Sneha to Manila for NTFP-EP Executive Board meeting
6. Leo to Vietnam for Workshop on participatory training methodology in beekeeping
7. Suganthil to Nagarkovil - PGS Meeting for Women

NOVEMBER 2010

1. Performance Reviews for Keystone Staff
2. TED x talk by Mathew at Coimbatore
3. Staff tour to Rameswaram & Madurai
4. Pratim to Core Group Meeting SWGM at Mangalore, Soans Island
5. Zaheda visits Keystone
6. Sam to Ladakh – PGS Training
7. Tanya Konlu from NTFP-EP, Manila visits Keystone
8. Sumin to the University of Leeds, United Kingdom
9. Mathew to National Centre for Organic Farming, Delhi for final consultation for launch of PGS India by Government of India

DECEMBER 2010

1. Master Medical Check up for staff
2. Pratim to Community Radio Station Workshop in Delhi – National Consultation

3. Screening Committee Meeting and interaction with Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Govt. of India for Keystone's application for CRS
4. Monica – Swallows Sweden Director and Margoth – Forum Syd, Funding agency from Sweden to Keystone to discuss support, process of SWGM
5. Eight staff of Keystone discuss Land Project next to Keystone as a community housing initiative
6. Meeting with Principal Secretary, Forests, PCCF and Chief Wildlife Warden on Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel with Panel member B J Krishnan and Civil Society Coordinator – Pratim for a discussion on 10 Western Ghats district in TN and what priorities and issues to be taken up
7. Shola Fellowship – Turtle Bay, near Mangalore
8. Balachander and Eswar to Prakruti, Sirsi
9. Moorthy and group to Dimapur for Honey Expo
10. Shelby Joseph and Gabriela Ortiz from Mexico visit Keystone
11. Maya from Swallows visits
12. Future Earth Meeting in Trichy
5. West Bengal State Action Plan on Climate Change – Pratim part of team led by IC, Hyderabad
6. Travel to Moodbidri with large group of students and youth from Nilgiris for SWGM 2011
7. Community Forest Resources workshop at Keystone
8. Selvi and Subramani to Velankani - Community Radio Training
9. Visit by Consultant on Community Radio from BECIL Bengaluru
10. NFTP Eco - Certification Meeting at Keystone
11. Bhaskar Mitra from Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai visits

FEBRUARY 2011

JANUARY 2011

1. Environmental Governance in Nilgiris – discussions with Collector and plan of action
2. Ecotourism initiative brainstorming at Keystone – Sara, Sumin and Senthil with Mathew & Pratim
3. SWGM follow-up and meeting with Collector – Ms. Archana Patnaik, IAS, Project Director – HADP, Ms. Meeta Banerjee, IFS on the final programme for Public Consultations on Ecologically Sensitive Areas in Nilgiris
4. Public Consultations – WGEEP – walk-outs by wildlife activists and confrontation between resort owners and environmentalists at Ooty.
1. Ajay Rastogi takes a session on “Nature Contemplation” with staff
2. B J Krishnan resigns as Advisor of Keystone Foundation
3. Luke from South Africa does an excellent photo-documentation of Keystone activities
4. Osama Manzar, Digital Empowerment Foundation, Delhi here on Digital Panchayats project with Keystone
5. Leo to Erode for PGS Meeting
6. Leo to Bangalore for UD Partners Project Progress Report Sharing and Millet Mela
7. First Workshop on strengthening PCD's with Access Livelihood Consulting
8. Workshop on Strengthening Economic orientation of community enterprises for NTFP -EP India partners
9. Workshop on Honey for NTFP-EP India Partners

10. Bupendra Maru from Puducherry visits

MARCH 2011

1. Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel and Core Group SWGM face to face at Bangalore meeting to give our final feedback and conclusions from Civil Society
2. Miller to Chennai - Organic Farming Meeting By Future Earth
3. Second and third workshops on strengthening PCD's with Access Livelihood Consulting
4. Sneh leaves for Manila for NTFP-EP Meeting
5. Pratim to Kolkata on Climate Change assignment and to Darjeeling hills and Jalpaiguri
6. Mathew, Justin and Suganthi to Kumbaya
7. Selvi - HIV/AIDS Mainstreaming workshop in Orissa
8. Bala to Delhi for Training on Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) by CordAid
9. P.Chandran, Balasubramani, Kumar, Saravanan to Bhubaneshwar for FRA Workshop







ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Keystone Foundation is registered under the Indian Trust Act, 1882.
Registration No. 1883 of 1993

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