

Sacred Groves

Sacred groves comprise patches of forest or natural vegetation – from a few trees to forests of several hundred hectares – that are usually dedicated to local folk deities or tree spirits. These spaces are protected by local communities because of their religious beliefs and traditional rituals that run through several generations. They are known by different names in different parts of India.

Sacred groves are important repositories of floral and faunal diversity that have been conserved by local communities in a sustainable manner. They are often the last refuge of endemic species in the geographical region. The groves are associated with ponds, streams or springs, which help meet the water requirements of the local people. The vegetative cover also helps in recharging the aquifers and in maintaining the soil stability.

With rapid urbanization, cultural diffusion of tribal and rural communities has been taking place over the last hundred years. The values and taboos associated with traditional belief systems are rapidly changing throughout India. As a result, sacred groves have slowly started losing their status and are regarded as sources of revenue and encroached upon. Sacred groves are felled to raise commercial plantation, due to which several groves have disappeared.

As a result, these repositories of ancient wisdom and diversity are being reduced to small pockets of trees and plants.

As part of the UN Decade of Biodiversity, CPREEC is organizing a Conference on Conservation of Sacred Groves to Protect Local Biodiversity at Chennai on February 12, 13, and 14, 2011.

The major objectives of the conference are

- ❖ To promote scientific documentation and conservation efforts in the light of the cultural ethos
- ❖ To popularize sacred groves as ecological heritage sites
- ❖ To prepare a road map for sacred grove conservation in the broad canvas of biodiversity conservation
- ❖ To bring about synergy between culture, heritage, science and conservation
- ❖ To function as a pivotal point for future researchers in sacred groves and ecological heritage
- ❖ To create a knowledge bank and to disseminate relevant information
- ❖ To bring about policy initiatives and revitalize existing legislation to protect natural heritage sites
- ❖ To explore ways and means to identify sacred groves as “National Ecological Heritage Sites”

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CONSERVATION OF SACRED GROVES TO PROTECT LOCAL BIODIVERSITY

Registration Form

Full Name (in capitals) :

Organization / Institute / University :
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.....

Age : Sex :

Address for Correspondence :

Contact No. :

Email :

Cheque / DD No.....

Amount : Date :

Name of the Bank & Branch.....
.....

Signature of the participant :

Place : Date :

Conference details

Dates : February 12, 13, and 14, 2011

Venue : Chennai, Tamilnadu

Registration fees

Indian delegates ₹ 2000

Foreign delegates \$ 50

Registration fees include the conference kit, lunch and resource materials. Accommodation is not included.

Last date for registration : **January 10, 2011**

Registration fee, in the form of cheque / DD, to be drawn in favour of C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre, payable at Chennai.

Co-sponsors

Ministry of Environment & Forests,

Government of India

M.S.Swaminathan Research Foundation

C.P.Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation



Contact Address

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Inauguration on February 12, 2011, at 10.00 a.m. at PUTHUPET Sacred Grove, East Coast Road, Villupuram District, Tamilnadu, India. (Transport will be provided from CPREEC at 7.30 a.m.)



NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CONSERVATION OF SACRED GROVES TO PROTECT LOCAL BIODIVERSITY



C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre (CPREEC) is a Centre of Excellence of the Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India, established jointly by the Ministry and the C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation. CPREEC has been set up to increase consciousness and knowledge about the environment and the major environmental problems facing the country today.

CPREEC has also been designated as an ENVIS Centre exclusively for hosting a website with related information on ECOLOGICAL TRADITIONS AND SACRED SITES OF INDIA (www.cpreecenvis.nic.in). CPREEC has done pioneering work in documenting Indian ecological traditions, spreading the message of protection and conservation of biodiversity by emphasizing the conservation traditions of India and in restoring sacred groves.