



CALL FOR EFFORTS TO RAISE PRODUCTIVITY OF FORESTS

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A substantial portion of the forests in India is not producing enough timber and eco-system services. Effort needs to be focused on enhancing the quality and increasing the productivity of the nation's forests at a time when some Indian States are struggling to achieve the vital balance between developmental works and environmental conservation. Director-General of Forests and Special Secretary in the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Dr Sharad Singh Negi said this while speaking at the convocation of 2014-16 batch, Central Academy for State Forest Service (CASFoS) at the Forest Research Institute here on Sunday.

Addressing the officer trainees on the occasion, Negi said, "The forestry sector has opened up in a big way with technology helping to take it beyond the traditional in forestry. Though information technology is being used for working plans, as forestry officials you should keep abreast of latest technological developments. It is important to ensure that the forestry sector doesn't lag behind other sectors involved in the digital India initiative launched by prime minister Narendra Modi. Considering that forests cover about 24 per cent of the total land area in India, foresters struggling with digitalisation of forest boundaries is just one of the many challenges in the sector. We need to enhance the quality and productivity of our forests also because a substantial proportion of the total forest area is not producing enough timber and eco system services. However, with about 35,000 hectares of forest land being diverted in a year for developmental activities, it is vital to achieve necessary balance between environmental conservation and developmental works. Some States with considerable mining activity are struggling to achieve this balance. As forestry officers, try to change the system for the better wherever you are posted. Don't be mainly a careerist and work hard with sincerity and the promotions and other career developments will come on their own," said Negi.

CASFoS principal Meera Iyer informed that during the two-year training course, the officer trainees were taught 19 academic subjects apart from field exercises on working plan, road alignment, forest survey and engineering. Additionally, about 145 days of study tours in northern, eastern, western and southern India were also conducted

The 39 officer trainees of the convocating batch were sponsored by various State Governments- 31 from Maharashtra, six from Tamil Nadu and three from Madhya Pradesh. The MoEFCC gold medal for scoring highest in the batch was awarded to Makrand Prakash Gujar of Maharashtra while the silver medal for best all rounder officer trainee and most practical forester was awarded to Srikant Subhash Pawar of Maharashtra.

Silver medal for proficiency in forest management and working plan was won by Pradip Eknath Patil of Maharashtra and silver medal for proficiency in ecology by Geeta Vishal Pawar also from Maharashtra among other medals.

Source: <http://www.dailypioneer.com/state-editions/call-for-efforts-to-raise-productivity-of-forests.html>