



Colloquium: Community Management System ‘Oran’ Conserves Biodiversity and Protects Rural Livelihoods: Experiences from KRAPAVIS

Speaker:

Aman Singh, Founder, Krishi Avam Paristhitiki Vikas Sansthan (KRAPAVIS)

Date / Time:

April 24, 2014 - 4:00pm - 5:30pm

Venue:

10th Floor, Pixel A, Azim Premji University

Abstract:

‘Orans’ are community forests that act as a store of biodiversity, enable effective water management and serve as a community based regeneration system, which also ensure sustainable extraction of Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFPs) by villagers, in the world’s oldest Aravali Mountain Range and in the Great Indian Desert of Rajasthan (India). There are about 25000 orans in Rajasthan that cover more than 600,000 hectares and provide a much-needed lifeline and safeguard to their respective communities. Until two decades ago, orans have suffered widespread degradation due to neglect and misguided priorities, opposition from hostile actors such as profit-seeking corporations, the introduction of foreign flora and fauna that compromise biodiversity and from a changing climate, all of which led to a marked decline in the condition of orans. Founded to address the above challenges, KRAPAVIS, an organization of local people, has been working for 21 years to revive orans, both physically and conceptually, in the desert and Aravali regions. This talk will discuss the various strategies through which KRAPAVIS has contributed to sustainable natural resource management and made a tangible difference to awareness of biodiversity, instilled respect for the land and its multiple uses, and improved thousands of local eco-systems across one of India’s most water-challenged states. It will also demonstrate how the work of KRAPAVIS serves as a model for stakeholder engagement at multiple levels (international, government and local communities) to realize tangible environmental improvements that enable future generations to continue their productive stewardship of the land.

A Note on the Speaker:

Aman Singh is the Founder of Krishi Avam Paristhitiki Vikas Sansthan (KRAPAVIS), a voluntary organisation which works towards the betterment of ecological, agricultural and livestock practices, to ensure sustainable livelihoods for pastoral communities in Rajasthan. Its

success has led it to be selected as a finalist for the UNDP Equator Prize. Aman has been awarded with prestigious awards include 'Dalmia Environment and Water Conservation Award', a state level award for environment conservation and another one 'Asian Technical Award'. He is an Ashoka Fellow and has received several fellowships from international agencies such as UNDP, UNOCHA, Schumacher College, the Ford Foundation and the University of California. Aman has written extensively on rural ecology and pastoralism, and has presented to international audiences in countries as diverse as Scotland, Nepal, Kenya, Bulgaria and the US. Aman holds an MSc in Environmental Education, is a graduate of the University of California's Environmental Leadership Programme, and has studied Deep ecology/ bioregionalism at the UK's Schumacher College.