

Himalayan Forest Research Institute, Shimla

WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION 2015

Himalayan Forest Research Institute (HFRI), Shimla observed **World Day to Combat Desertification (WDCD)** at Panthaghati, SHIMLA.



THEME:

**ATTAINMENT OF FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL
THROUGH SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS**



**हिमालयन वन अनुसंधान संस्थान
शिमला**

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. V.P. Tewari, Director, HFRI, Shimla informed that the theme of this year is **“Attainment of food security for all through sustainable food systems”** with the slogan, **“No such things as free lunch invests in healthy soils”**. He further said that year 2015 is **International Year of Soils**.

Land degradation and desertification directly affect right to food. Nearly one billion people are under nourished. About 12 million hectares of productive land is being degraded every year in the world. Many green house gases are being released in the atmosphere through land degradation and other inappropriate land use. Climate change and unsustainable land use are contributing to the decline of fresh water resources resulting in decline in global food production. Director, HFRI said that in order to meet future needs for food, freshwater, bio-fuels, and urban growth, we have to ensure sustainable land management and suggested management strategies to combat desertification and drought.



Dr. Tewari informed that HFRI has been designated as an Advance Centre for taking up studies on cold desert afforestation and pasture management by *Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education*, Dehra Dun. Highlighting the research activities carried out by HFRI, Shimla in cold deserts areas of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir, he said that nursery and plantation technologies of some prominent socio-economically important and ecologically relevant species like, *Capparis spinosa*, *Hippophae rhamnoides*, *Ribes orientale*, *Caraga gerardiana*, *Rosa webbiana*, *Collutea nepalensis*, *Elaeagnus angustifolia*, *Rosa webbiana*, have been standardized. In addition to this, ecological and management studies in certain dry temperate and alpine pastures of Lahaul-Spiti and plant diversity studies in cold deserts of district Kinnaur (H.P.) and Hemis High Altitude National Park, Ladakh, (J & K) have been conducted by this Institute. Besides this, the Institute has also conducted studies on large scale drying of Willow in Lahaul-Spiti and a detailed report suggesting remedial measures was submitted to the Government of Himachal Pradesh. The works carried out by the Institute in the cold deserts invariably aimed at eco-restoration activities in the deserts including enhancement of biomass production in pastures to feed the livestock population, which visits these pastures for most part of the year.



Dr. Ranjeet Singh, Senior Scientist, HFRI, Shimla discussed various aspects of desertification and drought in detail through his presentation. He said that reversing degradation of the soils, delivers a range of benefits including improved nutrients and water management, soil organic carbon content, natural pest and disease regulation.

At the end, Shri Pradeep Bhardwaj, Head, Agroforestry & Extension Division, thanked Dr. V.P. Tewari, Director, Dr. K. S. Kapoor and Dr. Ranjeet Singh for sharing their experiences and all the other participants present during this occasion.



