

CONVENING PAPER

Designing impact pathways for forest landscape restoration

14-15 July 2025, ICFRE, Dehradun, India



Background

India faces pressing challenges in forest landscape degradation; despite an increase in forest and tree cover to 25.17%, it is still below the 33% target of the National Forest Policy (1988).

To address these issues, the Restore, Conserve and Protect Forest and Tree Cover for Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) Implementation in India (RECAP4NDC) project was launched as a six-year Indo-German cooperation initiative. Commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUKN) and implemented by a consortium led by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) India, the project involves the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) India, Forest Survey of India (FSI), The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE), and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

The project is being implemented in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR), Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Uttarakhand, with a target to restore 0.4 million hectares of degraded forest landscapes and benefit 10 million people through enhanced ecosystem services by 2029.

Overview of the workshop

A two-day consultation workshop was held in ICFRE, Dehradun, India, which brought together around 40 participants, including representatives from State Forest Departments, Forest Survey of India, Forest Research Institute, Van Panchayats (community forest governance institutions in India), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and GIZ. The workshop was co-organised by ICIMOD, ICFRE and GIZ to map impact pathways connecting capacity-building efforts with forest landscape restoration outcomes, and to identify critical gaps in technical, institutional, and financial capacities. Through facilitated plenary and group discussions, participants outlined ways to align institutional and community efforts to support Uttarakhand's forest restoration goals. Participants also reflected on key drivers of forest degradation and systemic gaps that hinder effective restoration.

Thematic insights from the consultation

- i. During the workshop, participants developed a shared understanding of impact pathway frameworks and their relevance for forest landscape restoration through structured sessions and hands-on exercises.
- ii. Thematic group work focused on:
 - a) Identifying key challenges and capacity gaps in forest landscape restoration (FLR) across different contexts
 - b) Mapping long-term visions for landscape restoration and linking them with short- and medium-term outcomes
 - c) Recognising key assumptions and risks in implementing capacity interventions
- iii. Discussions emphasised that community engagement, particularly of local governance institutions such as [Van Panchayats](#), is central to sustained ecological restoration outcomes, improved forest governance, and long-term livelihood resilience.
- iv. Technical sessions addressed the relevance of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in supporting inclusive conservation strategies aligned with global biodiversity targets, particularly the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (Target 3) and Aichi Target 11.
- v. During the technical sessions, experts introduced participants to basic methods for identifying potential OECM sites using Earth Observation (EO) and geo-information tools, highlighting opportunities for data-driven conservation planning.

Focused discussion areas and key reflections from group exercises

1. *Strengthening local forest governance*
 - a. Revitalising Van Panchayats for effective and participatory forest management.
 - b. Enhancing interdepartmental coordination for integrated restoration efforts.
2. *Preserving and reviving traditional ecological knowledge*
 - a. Documenting indigenous forest management practices and ensuring intergenerational transfer of knowledge and skills
 - b. Engaging youth in cultural and ecological restoration initiatives.
3. *Bridging technical and knowledge gaps*
 - a. Leveraging expertise from academic institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to connect science with community needs.
 - b. Promoting accessible digital tools for climate risk awareness and preparedness.
4. *Enhancing livelihoods and economic resilience*
 - a. Identifying viable forest-based value chains for sustainable income.
 - b. Designing equitable Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models for community benefit.
5. *Fostering social mobilisation and inclusive participation*
 - a. Ensuring meaningful representation of marginalised groups in FLR processes.
 - b. Institutionalising community-led monitoring for improved accountability and ownership.
6. *Improving policy and funding mechanisms*
 - a. Advocating for policy reforms that support anticipatory restoration planning.
 - b. Streamlining funding flows for timely and sustained restoration interventions.

Way forward

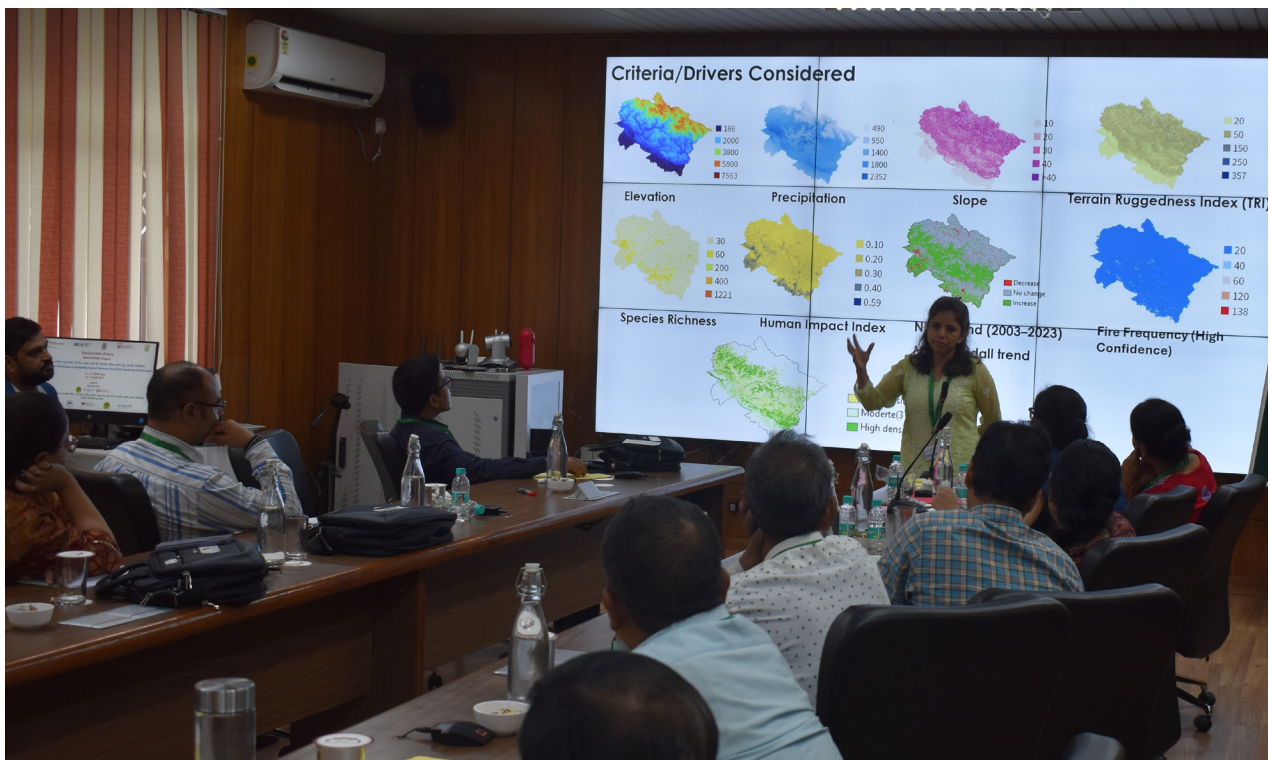
- ICIMOD will develop a synthesised impact pathway roadmap based on group exercises, linking capacity inputs to expected FLR outcomes and identifying institutional, technical, and financial needs.
- ICIMOD will prepare a preliminary online training module to guide practitioners in applying impact pathway thinking to FLR efforts.
- Follow-up activities will include an actor mapping exercise and gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) responsive training to be hosted at ICIMOD headquarters to deepen regional learning and collaboration.

Annexe 1: Participants actively engaged in group exercises on impact pathways





able that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial and inland water marine and coastal areas, especially areas of particular importance for ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and high ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, their traditional territories.



Media Coverage

वन परिदृश्य पुनर्स्थापन के लिए प्रभाव मार्गों की रूपरेखा पर परामर्श कार्यशाला

देहरादून, संवाददाता। भारतीय वनिकी अनुसंधान एवं शिक्षा परिषद (ICFRE), GIZ, IUCN, TERI, ICIMOD और FSI "Restore, Conserve and Protect Forest and Tree Cover for NDC Implementation in India (RECAPyNDC Project)" नामक भारत-जर्मन साझेदारी परियोजना का क्रियान्वयन कर रहा है। ICFRE इस परियोजना के अंतर्गत उत्तराखंड, गुजरात, महाराष्ट्र और दिल्ली एवं राष्ट्रीय राजधानी क्षेत्र में वन परिदृश्य पुनर्स्थापन के लिए क्षमता निर्माण, ज्ञान साझाकरण और संस्कार संकेतों का कार्यान्वयन कर रहा है। ICFRE, ICIMOD और GIZ के सहयोग से 14-15 जुलाई 2025 को ICFRE, देहरादून में वन परिदृश्य पुनर्स्थापन के लिए प्रभाव मार्गों की रूपरेखा पर दो दिवसीय परामर्श कार्यशाला का सफलतापूर्वक आयोजन किया। इस कार्यक्रम का उद्देश्य वन परिदृश्य पुनर्स्थापन के दीर्घकालिक



तकनीकों पर प्रतिभागियों को एक मंच पर लाना तथा क्षमता निर्माण की भूमिका पर समन्वय स्थापित करना था। इस कार्यक्रम में उत्तराखंड और गुजरात के राज्य वन विभागों, उत्तराखंड की वन पंचायतों के सदस्य, ICFRE, GIZ, IUCN, FSI,

TERI, ICIMOD, ICFRE-FRI, गैर-सरकारी संगठनों और विशेषज्ञों सहित कुल 42 प्रतिभागियों ने भाग लिया। श्रेणी कांचन देवी, महानिदेशक, ICFRE ने कहा कि विभिन्न कारणों से बहुत मात्रा में भूमि क्षरण की स्थिति में है, परंतु इसमें पुनर्स्थापन

की अत्यंत संभावनाएं हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि स्वच्छ जल, उपजाऊ मृदा, जलवायु का नियंत्रण और उदात्त वन परिदृश्य जैसे परिचित संकेतों में सुधार वन परिदृश्य पुनर्स्थापन प्रयासों के माध्यम से कृषि, संरक्षण प्रबंधन और समुदायों की सुदृढ़ता के लिए अत्यंत आवश्यक है। उन्होंने उत्तराखंड की वन पंचायतों की सहभागितापूर्ण वन प्रबंधन में भूमिका को भी रेखांकित किया। डॉ. राजेश शर्मा, उप महानिदेशक (अनुसंधान), ICFRE ने कार्यक्रम का आभारवाचन प्रस्तुत किया। श्री वुडन बर्निकाल, वरिष्ठ सलाहकार, आई और डॉ. सुनील चौधरी, परितंत्र सेक्टर विशेषज्ञ, ICIMOD ने उद्घाटन टिप्पणी में RECAPyNDC परियोजना के बारे में बताया। डॉ. दीप सिंह, चेयरमैन, निदेशी एवं रिजर्वेशन विशेषज्ञ, ICIMOD ने वन परिदृश्य पुनर्स्थापन में क्षमता निर्माण हेतु प्रभाव फय और "Theory of Change" की अवधारणा पर अपने अनुभव साझा किए। कार्यक्रम में उपस्थित

सभी प्रतिभागियों ने क्षमता निर्माण में संबंधित प्रमुख मुद्दों की पहचान में सक्रिय भागीदारी की। दो दिवसीय कार्यक्रम के दौरान प्रतिभागियों ने विविध संवाद सत्रों और समूह अभ्यासों में भाग लिया। कार्यक्रम सत्रों का संचालन वैज्ञानिक डॉ. शिल्पा चौधरी ने किया, जबकि डॉ. अर.एस. रावत, डॉ. दीप सिंह, और डॉ. पुष्पम त्रिपाठी ने सत्रों के संचालन द्वारा समन्वयी सहभागिता और ज्ञान आदान-प्रदान सुनिश्चित किया। कार्यक्रम में गुजरात और उत्तराखंड राज्य वन विभागों, वन पंचायतों एवं अनुसंधान संस्थानों के प्रतिनिधियों ने अपने विचार साझा करते हुए वन परिदृश्य पुनर्स्थापन के लिए सांख्यिकीय प्रयासों की प्रतिबद्धता दोहराई। डॉ. राजेश शर्मा उन महानिदेशक (अनुसंधान), ने कार्यक्रम के समापन संबोधन में वन परिदृश्य पुनर्स्थापन के तहत की प्रति हेतु राज्य वन विभागों, अनुसंधान संस्थानों, वन पंचायतों, गैर-सरकारी संगठनों एवं स्वदेशीय समुदायों के संयुक्त प्रयासों पर बल दिया।

Group photo



Annexe 2: Agenda of the workshop

Day 1: 14 July 2025, Monday

Time Hrs	Programme
09:30–10:00	Registration
Introduction and Context Settings Moderator: Shilpa Gautam, Scientist 'F', ICFRE	
10:00–10:30	Opening Remarks from ICIMOD – Sunita Chaudhary, Ecosystem Services Specialist, ICIMOD Opening Remarks from GIZ – Kundan Burnwal, Senior Advisor, GIZ Welcome Address and Overview of the Workshop – Rajesh Sharma, Dy. Director General (Research), ICFRE Address by – Kanchan Devi, IFS, Director General, ICFRE
10:30–10:45	Workshop Expectations: Poonam Tripathi, Geospatial Training Analyst, ICIMOD
10:45–11:15	Group Photo and Tea Break
11:15–11:30	Icebreaker and Introduction: Deepa Singh, Planning, Monitoring and Reporting Specialist, ICIMOD
11:30–12:00	Introduction to Impact Pathway/ Theory of Change – Deepa Singh, Planning, Monitoring and Reporting Specialist, ICIMOD
12:00–12:30	Overview of RECAP4NDC Project – Kundan Burnwal, Senior Advisor, GIZ-India
12:30–01:00	Setting the Context: Role of Capacity Building in Forest Landscape Restoration – R.S. Rawat, Scientist 'E', ICFRE
01:00–01:05	Discussion/ Q & A
01:05–02:00	Lunch Break
02:00–03:30	Understanding the Current Landscape Facilitator: Deepa Singh, ICIMOD supported by: Shilpa Gautam, ICFRE and Shachi Pandey, GIZ Dehradun Break out in Smaller Groups Group Discussion and Brainstorming on Forest Landscape Restoration and Capacity Building Group Share Insights
03:30–03:45	Tea Break
03:45–05:15	Building the Vision: Vision Mapping Exercise Facilitator: Deepa Singh, ICIMOD supported by: Monish Mullick, ICFRE and Aparna Pandey, GIZ Dehradun Group Work Mapping the Bigger Picture Consolidation of a Shared Vision/ Objective

Day 2: 15 July 2025, Tuesday

Time Hrs	Programme
09:30–09:40	Recap of the first day
09:40–11:00	Identifying Outcomes and Pathways Understanding the Outcomes Group Work: Identifying Outcomes Identify/ Revisit Activities Creating Causal Pathways
11:00–11:15	Tea Break
11:15–11:45	Group Reflection Sharing Sharing of Identified Outcomes and Pathways – Deepa Singh , ICIMOD and R.S. Rawat , ICFRE
11:45–01:15	Identification of Assumptions and Risks Explain – what assumptions and risks mean in Theory of Change Exploring assumptions and risks for each connection Group Division Prompt-general assumptions questions Specific assumptions questions
01:15–02:15	Lunch Break
02:15–02:45	Reflection on Impact Pathway and Follow Up Action: Poonam Tripathi, ICIMOD
02:45–03:45	Potential Mapping of Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM) in Uttarakhand – Sunita Chaudhary , Ecosystem Services Specialist, ICIMOD
03:45–04:15	Wrap up and Closing Session Workshop expectation reflection – Poonam Tripathi, ICIMOD – Gujarat State Forest Department – Uttarakhand State Forest Department – Van Panchayat representatives – Participants (experts, R&D institutions and NGOs) Closing Remarks – Rajesh Sharma , Dy. Director General (Research), ICFRE Vote of Thanks – Shilpa Gautam , Scientist 'F', ICFRE
04:15	Tea Break

Contributors: Poonam Tripathi, Deepa Singh, Sunita Chaudhry and R S Rawat

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