



**Centre for Ecology
Development and
Research**



Annual Report 2014-15

Partners

Department of Geography, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

Yale Himalayan Initiative (YHI), Yale School of Forestry, USA

Central Himalayan Rural Action Group (CHIRAG), Odakhan, Nainital

Central Himalayan Environment Association, Mallital, Nainital

South Asia Institute of Advanced Studies (SIAS), Nepal

Forest Research Institute, Dehradun

Doon Library and Research Centre

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Duke University, USA

Funders:

Ecosystem Services and Poverty Allevation Program, UK

Department of Science and Technology, (SERB), India

Ministry of Environment and Forest, (Climate Change) India

Uttarakhand State Council for Science and Technology, Dehradun

Sir Ratan Tata Trust

Navajbai Ratan Tata Trust

M.G. Shahani & Co (Delhi) Ltd.

Doon Library and Research Centre

Pevibai Motiram Shahani Trust, Delhi

Memorandum of Understanding

Department of Forestry, Kumaun University, Nainital, Uttarakhand

Department of Forestry, HNB Garhwal University, Srinagar, Uttarakhand

Registrations

*Cedar is registered under Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860
Registration No S-54758 of 2006*

*Registered Under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), Registration
No 347900178 (Educational Social)*

*The society holds a status of a Scientific and Research Organisation (SIRO)
registered under Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR),
Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India*

From the Chairman's Desk



It is an absolute pleasure to serve as a Chairman of Centre for Ecology Development and Research (CEDAR) and be a part of an academically and socially active research group. It is quite satisfying to note that a small organisation in a short period of time has started to achieve its goal of bridging the gap between academia and developmental activities, the philosophy with which it was created.

We continue to generate knowledge that seeks a blend between biophysical aspects of the environment and social factors concerning natural resource management and livelihoods.

The impacts are visible through our research publications and other publications meant for communicating to the decision makers and planners in the area of sustainable development. We are glad to share that within a period of a decade or so, CEDAR has been able to establish collaboration with world's prestigious universities like the Cambridge University of United Kingdom and Yale and Duke Universities of the United States of America. Our research projects have focussed on signifying the need to take advantage of sound research in view of developmental activities conducted in the Himalayan region on one hand, while conducting classical forest ecology experiments to understand the impacts of human disturbance and climate change in the region on the other.

Connected to this is the progress that CEDAR has made this year in developing a team of researches with backgrounds varying from ecology to forestry and wildlife to economics and anthropology. The research group displays high ability to understand the problems related to ecology and environment in view of the currently growing economy and knowledge of measures that need to be taken to make development more sustainable in the Himalayas.

In the end I would express my gratefulness on behalf of CEDAR board members to all funding organisations, collaborating groups and individuals. I wish CEDAR for another busy and productive year ahead. I thank you all for your support and look forward to your continuing interest in our work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S.P. Singh'. The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

S.P. Singh
Chairman

Moving ahead.....



This has been an important year for CEDAR. While we have always seen ourselves as an interdisciplinary organisation, in the initial years after our formation we focused on our core strength and competence of forest ecology. This year, through the project on Water security and Ecosystem Services, we were able to expand our area of work both thematically and geographically. From a focus that has been on rural and protected ecosystems, we have moved this year into urban ecosystems. The availability of better health and education facilities in small towns is driving the process of urbanization in the Himalaya. There appears to be a rapid decrease in dependence on traditional agricultural activities in the mountains of Uttarakhand as people move to service based and tertiary occupations. There is inadequate research on this trend and the formulation of policy to deal with these new realities has been slow. It is therefore important for organisations such as CEDAR to start studying these small urban clusters that are mushrooming across the Himalayan landscape.

While CEDAR began establishing a network of permanent plots in forests across different disturbance regimes in late 2013, this year saw an expansion of this network and the monitoring and re-measurements of these plots. By 2016, CEDAR plans to establish 100 plots, each 400m². We commit to monitoring these plots over a long term – with an initial target of 15 years – and we will make the data accessible and available to researchers from across the institutional spectrum.

This year past, also saw the strengthening and development of several institutional linkages. We are particularly excited about our linkages with three internationally recognised centres of learning. We see this as an opportunity for the young staff of CEDAR to be exposed to high quality academicians and learning processes. Through the programme on water supply, a robust relationship with the Dept. of Geography at Cambridge University, UK has already led to exchange of students and interns. A meeting in Dehradun co-hosted by the Yale Himalaya Initiative promises to lead to collaborative work with the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies at Yale University, USA. CEDAR also participated in a programme on alternate energy and improved cookstoves spearheaded by Duke University, USA. In addition, our linkages with the excellent forestry faculty at Kumaon University were strengthened this year. CEDAR sees itself in a place which allows it to collaborate with a multitude of organisations – from the Universities we discuss above, to the Forest Department and state administration and also with civil society organisations and village bodies working at the grassroots.

While CEDAR is already actively publishing – both in peer reviewed publications, as well as for general readership – we hope to build up our output in the year to come as we gather data from our core projects on forest ecology and ecosystem services. We also hope, in the

current year, to be able to influence and inform the development of environmental policy in the central Himalaya.

On behalf of all of us at CEDAR, I would like to thank all our well-wishers, partners and donors. The support we have received from our board, the state administration and Uttarakhand forest department, as well as academicians from several universities and private donors has been invaluable, and has allowed CEDAR to grow and contribute to the body of knowledge that exists on the Himalayan ecosystem.



Rajesh Thadani
Executive Director

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