

Brief Report on celebration of International Day for Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystems

Date: 26.07.2018

Place: Shib Mela Prangan, Dakshin Gobindapur village, Ramganga GP, Patharpratima

Organized by: Development Research Communication and Services Centre (DRCSC)

Supported by: Sign of Hope (SoH) & BMZ, Germany

Introduction:

Development Research Communication and Services Centre (DRCSC) is a non-government development organization working in 10 districts of West Bengal and other states for more than 35 years. DRCSC's major concern is food, nutrition and livelihood security of the poor through sustainable management of natural resources on the basis of principles and actions, that are environment friendly, economically appropriate, socially just and developed by mutual cooperation.

DRCSC is working with a vision for a **Sustainable future** free from poverty, hunger and **environmental degradation** and implement various projects with values for creating environment & ecology conscious society. DRCSC is implementing a project titled **"Sundarban Climate Adaptation"** with support from Sign of Hope (SoH) and BMZ, Germany in 8 villages of Ramganga Gram Panchayat, Patharpratima Block, South 24 Pgs District of West Bengal. The overall objective of this project is to regenerate and protect the endangered flora and fauna of the Sundarbans in a sustainable manner and focus on reforestation and empowerment of the local population with regard to resource management and positive management strategies, thus contributing to the improved resilience of the target group in the face of natural disasters.



Coastal mangroves are among the most threatened ecosystems on earth. Current estimates indicate that up to 67% of mangroves have been lost to date, and nearly all unprotected mangroves could perish over the next 100 years. The stakes are high, because mangrove ecosystems provide benefits and services that are essential for life. The importance of mangrove ecosystems lies from advancing food security, sustaining fisheries and forest products and offering protection from storms, tsunamis, cyclones and sea level rise to preventing shoreline erosion, regulating coastal water quality and providing habitats for endangered marine species etc. This includes the unique role that they play in sequestering and storing

significant amounts of coastal blue carbon from the atmosphere and ocean, crucial for mitigating climate change. This *International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem* is the moment for everyone to redouble their commitment to the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the *Paris Climate Agreement*.

With this backdrop, DRCS celebrated *International Day for Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystems* in Dakshin Gobindapur village, Ramganga, Patharpratima, South 24 Pgs of West Bengal on **26th July 2018** with active participation from Community members, Govt. officials and local Panchayat members.

Objective:

The objective of celebrating *International Day for Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystems* is to spread awareness among the community on importance of mangroves and its surrounding ecology and protect the nature to develop a conscious society.

Brief description of the programme:

The programme starts with a discussion session on importance of mangrove ecosystem. Mr. Subhasish Banerjee, Head of Finance & Administration team of DRCS welcomes the distinguished guests and community members and initiates the programme. After that the dignitaries are felicitated with flower bouquet and gift items. After that welcome song and inaugural lighting ceremony conducted. Following that Mr. Subhasish Banerjee introduced DRCS and share organization's vision, mission, objectives and activities in the neighbourhood areas. After that Mr. Tapas Mondal, Project Coordinator, Sunderban Climate Adaptation project share the goal, objective and activities of climate change adaptation issues and relate the importance and conservation of mangrove ecosystems.



Distinguished guests like; Mrs. Shyama Biswas, Sabhapati, Patharpratima Panchayat Samity, Mr. Shankar Das, Karmadhyaksha, Patharpratima Panchayat Samity, Mr. Subrata Mitra, Forest Ranger, Ramganga range office expressed their comments and views on mangrove ecosystem, environment friendly living habits and sustainable future. They all appreciate the involvement of DRCS in this venture and wish all success and ensure necessary support and cooperation from local government.



Other guests like; Ramganga Gram Panchayat members Mr. Gourhari Bag, Mr. Radheshyam Pandit, Mr. Sashank Pradhan, Mrs. Jabarani Das, Mrs. Nabanita Das, Mrs. Bithika Maity, Mr. Samir Kumar Jana etc. and members from Indraprastha Srijan Welfare Society were present on the programme and share their views.

In this programme nearly 351 community members (Male 51, Female 300) from Gobindapur and surrounding villages of

Ramganga GP and 45 guests (Male 38, Female 7) were present.

Along with the discussion session, nearly 5000 mangrove seedlings/saplings of 4-5 species were planted along the *Gobadia* riverside by the group members of Gobindapur village for regeneration of mangrove species.

Fruits and seeds of rare Mangrove species like Passur (*Xylocarpus mekongensis* Pierre), Kankra (*Bruguiera gymnorrhiza* (L) Lamk), Garjan (*Rhizophora mucronata* Lamk), Garan (*Ceriops decandra* (Griff) Ding Hou), Tora (*Aegialitis rotundifolia* Roxb) etc. were displayed in the programme.

Later after the discussion session, a **video film *Mangroves-Guardians of the Coast*** is shown to the participants. The video explains the effectiveness of mangrove species and its importance for mitigating the possible natural calamities and a wide scope for marine bio-diversity. It also showcases the regeneration process of mangrove species and involvement of local communities for protecting it. The mangrove species have many faceted use like, medicinal properties, fire-wood, furniture, handicrafts etc. which should be aware/sensitize among the common people in that area.



The programme was ended with local folk songs presented by local folk artists.



Planting of Mangrove saplings in Gobadia riverside