



Press Release

Bamboo Policy: Issues, Options and Actions

(Workshop on State Bamboo Policy)

(28 January 2015 – Academy of Administration, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh)

India has maximum area under bamboo in the world—approximately 113,610 sq km. Yet, we are not able to meet even domestic demand of this product. India holds the second place in the world with 125 species of bamboo belonging to 23 genera, next only to China (which, with 5,444 sq km of bamboo coverage, is second largest in the world). Contrary to the Indian situation, China accounts for 83.16 percent of the world trade in bamboo. Madhya Pradesh is the second largest state in the country with forest area of 94,689 sq km, of which 13,059 sq km is bamboo bearing. Bamboo provides the necessities of life to common man, besides which, it bestows upon us many environmental and ecological benefits. It is surprising then, that our bamboo sector isn't able to grow to meet the demand of the consumers and provide employment opportunities to the impoverished rural poor in the state. Management of natural bamboo forests hasn't been efficient enough in the past, which resulted in heavy exploitation and depletion of the stock and the sites.

Various groups, organisations and stake holders have raised their voice from time to time to unleash bamboo from clutches of bureaucracy and outdated regulations. Keeping this in view, the Madhya Pradesh State Bamboo Mission (MPSBM) has drafted State Bamboo Policy. To further validate and finalise the policy, MPSBM in association with Madhya Pradesh State Planning Commission (MPSPC), Centre for Civil Society (CCS) and South Asia Bamboo Foundation (SABF) as knowledge partners, organised a day long workshop. The objectives of the workshop were:

1. Review of existing bamboo policy, acts and legislations
2. To identifying bottlenecks for bamboo development and strengthening institutional mechanisms to commoditise bamboo
3. To facilitate bamboo harvesting in forest land and plantation in private land, tapping the potential market
4. Get suggestions on a draft Bamboo Policy Framework for addressing the identified issues

The workshop was inaugurated by Vice Chairman of the Madhya Pradesh State Planning Commission Mr B L Jain. Addressing the delegates of the workshop, Mr Jain said, *"Bamboo is a wonderful plant which has plenty of use. It is unfortunate that in a country like India, where we have intense poverty, we haven't been able to use bamboo as resource to increase livelihood*



options. MP has huge forest reserve with bamboo and we will make sure to work with MPSBM to utilise it as resource."

Experts on bamboo policy, product and art from all over the country participated in the workshop and gave their key input. Addressing the workshop, Mission Director of MPSBM, Dr Ajoy Bhattacharya said, "MPSBM would make sure that the state policy is in line with the expert deliberation made *in the workshop. We are looking forward to have the most competitive policy among the bamboo growing states. MPSBM is committed to growth of bamboo sector in the state and creating a role model for national policy in future."*

Mr Amit Chandra of Delhi-based think tank Centre for Civil Society, presented a set of recommendations to the draft of the state policy while Mr Kamesh Salam of SABF highlighted the shortcomings in the state and national policy framework. The workshop was facilitated by Mr Manoj Mathew of CCS.