



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR  
THE STUDY OF THE COMMONS



FOUNDATION FOR ECOLOGICAL SECURITY

# Sustaining Commons: Sustaining Our Future

## 13th Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of the Commons

Hyderabad, 10 - 14 January 2011

Hosted by FOUNDATION FOR ECOLOGICAL SECURITY

Chaired by: Mr. Nitin Desai | Co-Chair: Jagdeesh RaoPuppala

### CALL FOR PARTICIPATION





FOUNDATION FOR ECOLOGICAL SECURITY



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR  
THE STUDY OF THE COMMONS

## **Thirteenth Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of Commons (IASC)**

**Theme: Sustaining Commons: Sustaining our Future**

**January 10-14, 2011 Hyderabad, India**

**Hosted by FOUNDATION FOR ECOLOGICAL SECURITY**

**Chaired by: Mr. Nitin Desai | Co-Chair: Jagdeesh Puppala**

The 13<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC) will be held in Hyderabad, India from January 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The Conference is being held in South Asia for the first time; and in a departure from the past, will be hosted by a practitioner organization - Foundation for Ecological Security (FES). The Conference is not only a platform for furthering scholarship and debates centered around Commons, but also a space where practitioners, policy makers and researchers from across the world enrich the collective understanding on common property resources and identify areas and measures to inform policy and programmatic action as well as guide future research.

IASC 2011 will explore ways to sustain common property resources and Commons for the coming generations in the wake of ever increasing threats of privatization of collective assets and an increasing trend of atomization of rural and urban societies. The Conference will take a critical look at the interface between human and natural systems, Commons in particular, to build on our understanding on the elements and interconnectedness that sustain life, collective action and our future. On the one hand, the Conference will attempt is to bring in emerging theoretical and empirical work on managing common resources and examine the mechanisms to govern Commons (including New Commons); on the other, it will also bring to surface the questions that practitioners and policy makers face on the ground and in shaping public policy.

The Conference will contribute rich lessons and principles for managing local, complex, as well as global Commons such as international arrangements to respond to climate change. Furthermore, rather than being an event in itself, the Conference will be a part of a much larger process that involves regular engagement with government and non-government entities across the country. These engagements will culminate in a set of concrete recommendations that will feed into the preparation of the 12th Five Year Plan of India.

### **Organisation of the Conference**

The Conference will provide opportunities for academics, researchers and practitioners to exchange ideas, knowledge and experience. Multiple forms of participation are envisaged at this global meeting. These include:

- Paper presentations: Author(s) of a single paper should submit an abstract for their single paper to a specific Conference sub-theme. The Program Committee will group each single paper submission with 2 to 3 other single paper submissions on a similar sub-theme/topic

to schedule concurrent panel sessions of 3 to 4 paper presentations total. (Note: Single papers authored by one or more persons are suitable for submission.)

- Thematic panels: Sponsoring organisations and other academic/research bodies are encouraged to organise and deliver focused policy/practitioner workshops. Thematic panels may also be established by a group of authors to examine a particular issue within a sector, such as forestry or fishing.
- Poster presentations: Poster sessions will be organised and slotted specific times in order to make the sessions more interactive and attractive both to those presenting and their potential audience. Other than presenting papers, practitioners would be encouraged to highlight their work through poster presentations.
- Video presentations: Special sessions will be organized for screening video, film, and other forms of presentation. Sharing the status of Commons, the issues faced, attempts at governing such resources, etc. could be shared through this new format of presentation.
- Pre-Conference workshops: A series of pre-Conference workshops will run on January 10. These will cater both to those new to the concept of 'common-pool resources' as well as the experts.
- Practitioners' Colloquium: Specific issues will be debated by small groups of practitioners with policy makers or researchers in small discussion groups.
- Young researcher sessions: Students starting out in research careers may benefit from taking part in sessions identified specifically for young researchers. The aim is to encourage attendance by young researchers and students.

### **ABOUT THE THEME: Sustaining Commons: Sustaining our Future**

For the 2011 Conference, the emphasis on the one hand is the importance of Commons to the communities depending on them for their livelihoods, and on the other hand it also explores the scope to contribute to global issues of climate change and governance. While the discussions on Commons have been growing and are being used across various new arenas – such as the Internet Commons, intellectual property rights, open source publishing, and other global Commons, in the case of India and South Asia, the issue of survival and sustaining local livelihoods are of great importance.

Our future and the future of generations to come would depend on our abilities to preserve and sustain the Commons. The Conference will examine the inter-linkages between poverty and Commons along with the role played by the Commons in the economic, social and political empowerment of the poor and the marginalized.

The Conference will be a forum to synthesize the existing analytical tools, understand the methodological challenges vis-à-vis these tools and propose new or improved tools that would help in overcoming these challenges. The Conference will also explore the complex interactions between human beings and natural systems; with papers, concentrating on the ecological and social dimensions of governing Commons. The Conference will explore impact of globalization on the governance of Commons and will critically examine the legal frameworks, from across the world, to govern Commons.

Seven sub-themes are suggested. The goal is to foster deeper discussions across all themes, including the analysis of institutional frameworks, the importance and influence of markets and public policy-making, and the interrelationships between policies and institutions at local, regional, national and international levels within the context of global transition. We will use the themes as a

means of identifying and threading together key issues facing common pool resources throughout the world. This will allow for cross-sectoral reflection on the content of the meeting and enable discussion and analysis that will push back the boundaries of knowledge and understanding on Commons issues.

## SUB-THEMES

The Conference will deal with physical common resources such as Forests, Grazing resources, Protected Areas, Water Resources, Fisheries, Coastal Commons, Lagoon Commons, Irrigation Systems, Livestock and Commons as well as New Commons such as Information Commons, Cultural Commons, Genetic Resources, Patents, Climate, etc.

The above subjects would be captured under the following sub-themes:

1. The Commons, Poverty and Social Exclusion;
2. Governance of the Commons: Decentralization, Property Rights, Legal Framework, Structure and Organization;
3. The Commons: Theory, Analytics and Data;
4. Globalisation, Commercialisation and the Commons;
5. Managing the Global Commons: Climate Change and other Challenges;
6. Managing Complex Commons (Lagoons, Protected Areas, Wetlands, Mountain Areas, Rangelands, Coastal Commons);
7. New Commons (Digital Commons, Genetic Commons, Patents, Music, Literature etc);

Please note that the papers may cut across more than one of the seven sub-themes. The illustrative sub-theme questions and topics below are intended to help contributors and are in no way binding.

For more information on the subthemes visit the conference website: [www.iasc2011.fes.org.in](http://www.iasc2011.fes.org.in)

## IMPORTANT DATES

- **March 31<sup>st</sup> 2010:** Deadline for submission of paper, panel and poster proposals
- **September 30<sup>th</sup> 2010:** Deadline for submission of papers
- **August 1<sup>st</sup> 2010:** Early registration deadline (tentative)

## GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS

We invite anyone interested or working on the issues relating to Commons to participate in the Conference. We encourage scholars and practitioners to submit abstracts for panels, individual papers, poster and videos. The panels, papers, poster and video abstracts should be submitted to the Conference Committee through the online submission process.

**Paper Abstracts:** Word Limit: 100-300 words. Identify the Conference Sub-Themes the abstract is relevant to (academic reviewers of your abstract will be assigned based on the sub-theme you indicate); provide a title for the abstract/paper; names and contact information for all contributing authors; 5 keywords (i.e. describing methods, region of study, etc). Note: Final paper should be between 6,000-10,000 words.

**Panel Abstracts:** Word Limit: 300-500 words. Panel abstracts should indicate the title and/or theme of a group of papers whose authors wish to present together in a common panel, and the names, titles and organizational affiliation of all the contributing and presenting authors, as well as the contact details for the Panel Coordinator. Authors may be members of an existing research project with funding, or individuals who have never collaborated before the Conference, but decide their work is similar and would like to have their presentations scheduled together. Attach the paper abstracts for each paper to be included in the panel (as above).

**Poster Abstracts:** Word Limit: 100-300 words. Identify the theme or provide a title for your poster; indicate if your poster will present a project, conceptual work, or results from an empirical study, etc. In your abstract, you may include key elements of the script of your poster.

Note: Practitioners are strongly encouraged to submit poster abstracts, and the profile of posters will be elevated at the IASC 2011 Conference, to successfully “bring a practitioner perspective to the Conference.”

**Video Abstracts:** Word Limit 100-300 words. Indicate the title of the video, run-time of the video, original format of the video, equipment needs for showing the video, production credits, date the film was produced and description of its original purpose if not created for this Conference itself, the contact details for the corresponding presenter. Provide a description of the content of the film, and provide a link to a clip of the video if available, which will assist the Reviewers in selecting the videos during the newly added Video Presentation sessions organized by IASC and FES.

For each type of abstract, authors should indicate their Name, Title and Organizational Affiliation for all contributing and presenting authors, as well as the contact details for the corresponding author/presenter.

The Academic Review Committee Members will select papers based on quality and appropriateness to the Conference. Interested participants are encouraged to submit an abstract on their topic of expertise that will be suitable for discussion and debate, even if it does not necessarily fit in the stated sub-themes.

### **Multiple Submission Guidelines**

In order to keep the participation at the Conference as wide as possible, the program co-chairs discourage multiple submissions for single-authored paper/poster presentation. Allowing multiple single-authored paper/poster presentations by one person would reduce the possibility for other participants to obtain funding to attend the Conference. Therefore, the program committee will follow the following guidelines regarding multiple submissions:

- we cannot accept two or more single authored papers from the same person;
- we cannot accept more than two papers that have the same author as one of the co-authors;
- an author presenting a paper at a panel cannot be the discussant for the same panel; and
- an author presenting a paper at a panel can chair a panel.

### **Funding for Participants**

We are hopeful that IASC may be able to partially fund a small number of Conference participants. If you wish to be considered for partial funding, you must indicate this in your abstract during the online submission.

## CONFERENCE HOST

Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) has been involved in assisting the management and governance of Common Property Land Resources since 1986. FES works towards the ecological restoration and conservation of land and water resources, in the uplands and other eco-fragile, degraded and marginalised zones of India and to set in place the processes of co-ordinated human effort and governance to this end. Working over the last two decades with village institutions that manage and govern Commons in diverse ecosystems spread over six States in India, FES is recognized for its activities around Commons. FES has been an institutional member of the International Association for the Study of Common Property (IASC) since 1999 and has been a regular participant at the biennial Conferences since 1998.

To know more, visit: [www.fes.org.in](http://www.fes.org.in)

### Conference Chair: Nitin Desai:



Mr. Desai is presently a Member of the Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change, set-up to coordinate national action plans for assessment, adaptation and mitigation of climate change and advise the Government on pro-active measures that can be taken by it to deal with the challenge of climate change. Mr. Desai was the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (1992 Rio Earth Summit) from 1990-1993. During the period, he coordinated the work of the Secretariat related to the development of Agenda 21, the principal programmatic outcome of the Conference. Later, in 2001 Mr. Desai acted as the Secretary-General of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002 Johannesburg Summit). After his retirement from the United Nations, Mr. Desai continues to be a Special Adviser to the Secretary General for the World Summit on the Information Society. He is also an Honorary Fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Science and the convener of one of the tracks in the Helsinki Process on Globalisation and Democracy. He is also a member of the Board of Governors of Foundation for Ecological Security (FES).

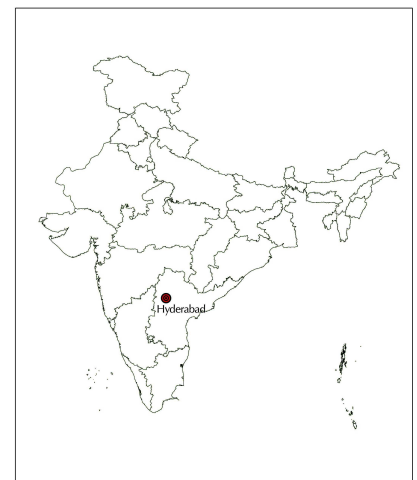
### Conference Co-Chair: Jagdeesh Puppala:



Jagdeesh has been the Chief Executive of the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) since its setting up in 2001. Essentially a practitioner, his entire professional life beginning in 1986 has been centered around the management of natural resources, particularly common property resources. Issues of interest and involvement include conservation of forests and water, political ecology, land use policies, dryland ecology and decentralised governance of natural resources.

## LOCATION OF THE CONFERENCE

The Conference will be held in Hyderabad, a city known for its rich history, culture and architecture. Hyderabad is one of the fastest growing cities in the country, with information technology and biotechnology powering the astonishing economic surge that the city has witnessed since the mid-1990's. Historically, it has represented a confluence of distinct cultural and linguistic traditions of Northern and Southern India, imparting a unique culture which is also a heady mix of Hindu and Muslim traditions and which is well reflected in its cuisine, architecture, markets and lifestyle. The Conference will coincide with the festival of Pongal; when the city is bedecked with thousands of colorful kites, and field trips will enable participants to experience the surrounding urban or rural commons.



The city enjoys a mild climate throughout the year, especially in January when the Conference is being held. The city's new facility-packed international airport has direct connections from Europe and South East Asia. There are convenient transportation facilities to and from the airport and within the city; good hotels tailored for all pockets; and warm and helpful people. All in all, the delegates are sure to have a memorable Conference in 2011.

The venue for the Conference is 'Dr. Marri Channa Reddy Human Resource Development Institute of Andhra Pradesh (MCRHRDI)', Hyderabad, India. The Institute is a nodal agency for all training activities pertaining to Government and is recognized for its quality in the areas of Training, Consultancy & Research Publications. The Institute offers excellent and affordable conference facilities and residential facilities.



To know more, visit: [www.hrdiap.gov.in](http://www.hrdiap.gov.in)

## SUBTHEMES

### 1. The Commons, Poverty and Social Exclusion:

This sub-theme may cover questions such as:

- What are the current challenges to Commons both from the perspective of ecological functions and rights of local communities over such resources?
- To what extent are frameworks like the ecosystem approach able to highlight links between the various functions and services provided by Commons (resources)? How critical are such functions, services and interdependencies with other production systems, in providing a safety net to the poor?
- What is the interrelationship between the ecological services /products, the dependent communities in shaping the institutional processes for management of Commons and how do they fare in providing safety net to the poor?
- Analyse the status of socially marginalized groups with respect to their access to benefits from Commons. Discuss social exclusion in general, and gender, caste and untouchability-based exclusion and discrimination in particular, since these are seen as causative factors for the deprivation of such groups.
- Estimating the value of benefits from Commons, with specific emphasis on the benefits to the poor. The authors may also discuss the importance of access to Commons in terms of dignity, empowerment, equity, participation, inclusion etc for the poor and marginalized sections.

### 2. Governance of the Commons: Decentralization, Property Rights, Legal Framework, Structure and Organization:

This sub-theme may cover such topics as:

- The integration of customary practice/law and statutory law and the inclusion/exclusion of ground level regimes of access and entitlements to common property resources; Traditional authority, equity and gender considerations and their reform in accordance with contemporary ethos, policies and laws.
- Impacts of State and National laws and policies on natural resources managed as CPRs; what are the gaps in policies and laws required to create and/or protect property rights? What types of rights are important? How is 'ownership' established?
- Planning from community to regional scales - What have we learned about planning processes/mechanisms, institutions and administrative structures.

- What are the emerging forms and designs of local self-governance institutions? What are the efforts on establishing and strengthening collective action by local community initiatives, involvement of different stakeholders, enabling administrative apparatus and policy initiatives? How are these emerging in the midst of privatization and centralization of government control on natural resources?
- Case studies of tenure over natural resources; and policy reforms on decentralization, affecting CPRs, and implications for theory and policy.
- What are institutional and administrative innovations to manage collective resources at local, national, regional and international levels? How do decisions and structures at different levels of governance impact at the local level both the Commons and the dependent communities?
- How do customary Commons institutions react to changing paradigms of development? Examples of pastoralism as against sedentary animal husbandry, wetlands conservation/ ports and fishing rights, protected areas and traditional hunting practices.

### **3. Globalisation, Commercialisation and the Commons:**

This sub-theme may cover such topics as:

- What is the theory on Common Property offering in an era where decentralization and centralized global governance instruments are emerging simultaneously? How does the principle of shared but differentiated responsibility translate into managing local, national and global Commons?
- What is the emerging architecture of global environmental governance and how are the interests of common properties and the dependent communities being safeguarded within and outside market based mechanisms?
- How does the State safeguard the interests of its own constituency in a market economy that acts outside/parallel to the functioning of the State? How does the state safeguard the intellectual property rights of popular wisdom, which are intellectual Commons? A major challenge is the use of practical cases that offer practical solutions to the global debate on globalisation and the Commons.
- Processes of change in CPR institutions adapting to the demands of commercialization - Institutional designs that are socially just, ecologically sound and economically viable. Issues of sustainability of CPR institutions could also be considered in this theme.

### **4. Managing the Global Commons: Climate Change and other Challenges:**

This sub-theme may cover topics such as:

- What impact would (climate change) instruments like Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD) have on local common resources, rights of local communities and local governance arrangements? Concerns that could be articulated for the post-Kyoto discussions?
- What have been the lessons and principles learnt in managing local Commons that could be translated and extrapolated to manage global Commons such as air, oceans, climate so as to demonstrate the importance of collective action and ecological resilience. What are the challenges in making these options socially and politically acceptable?
- What are the strategies to counter the influence of climate change associated occurrences, such as floods, droughts, heat waves and windstorms across states and countries? What are the successful arrangements at local, national and regional levels for the governance of transnational resources like rivers, mountain systems etc. that could be extended to policy discussions on inter-governmental responsibilities to address climate change?
- What means have been effective to get indigenous and CPR voices into international discussions on the CDM, CBD, prototype carbon markets, biofuels, etc;
- What is the emerging architecture of global environmental governance and what are the implications for governance of common properties at local, regional and national scales?

## **5. The Commons: Theory, Analytics and Data:**

This sub-theme may address issues such as:

- Theoretical synthesis of past work to clarify conceptual issues; Synthesis of past work that identify methodological challenges and suggest strategies for overcoming them;
- Introduction of new data sets, data collection techniques, and analytical methods, and comparisons of historical, comparative, game theoretic and other approaches to the study of Commons.
- Analytical tools for improving Governance of the Commons – Coupled Natural and Human Systems, System Dynamics, GIS applications, etc. This would involve work on the integration of various tools and techniques from ecological and social sciences as well as other disciplines;
- Contribution of Ecological Economics in computing the benefits from the Commons. What are the methodological challenges for measuring the potential of social and economic benefits from managing natural resources as Commons?
- Contributions of social science to environmental and natural resource management - How can we bring together theoretical constructs evolved from social science and economics backgrounds with those of the natural sciences and vice versa to improve human interactions with natural resources and the environment?

## **6. Managing Complex Commons (Lagoons, Protected Areas, Wetlands, Mountain Areas, Rangelands, Coastal Commons):**

This sub-theme may cover topics such as:

- Improving understanding of the multi-functionality nature of the Commons. What are the parameters to determine the domains, size and interdependency such that the comprehensive nature is captured; and yet interventions do not compromise the character of the Commons.
- Design, features and characteristics of institutional forms designed to manage complex and multiple functions, use-regimes and users; their advantages and limitations
- To what extent can Game Theory and Systems Dynamics offer insights for management of multi-functional and complex Commons? Can they advance a better understanding of coupled social and natural systems?
- What type of institutional and policy changes might be required for managing multi-functional Commons at different scales: local, regional and international?

## **7. New Commons (Digital Commons, Genetic Commons, Patents, Music, Literature etc.)**

Topics that may be discussed under this sub-theme include:

- Innovative examples of policy and legal frameworks and effective alternatives for crafting institutions for resource management and use that enable partnerships among global actors and national/regional governments, communities, private sector, and civil society. How CPR and community issues and perspectives are being and should be incorporated in global convention discussions and standard setting?
- Intellectual property rights, patents and certifications, genetic resources, media, Internet, portals/digital libraries and online publications, open source, music, literature etc are all being studied as new Commons. The papers may explore the institutional mechanisms and policy framework for working with such common resources.
- Urban Commons—of condominiums; parks, water bodies, potable water, transport other common spaces and facilities; evolving roles of municipalities.
- Understanding innovations creative Commons, scientific Commons, knowledge production platforms; and appreciating the next-generation issues.

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**13th IASC 2011**  
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