

# Doon-based ICFRE releases '8 standards for sustainable forest mgmt'

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DEHRADUN: The Indian Council for Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE), the country's premier body for research and training in forestry, introduced the National Working Plan Code-2023 (NWPC) on Saturday, coinciding with the 'World Day To Combat Desertification & Drought.'

The NWPC will incorporate the India Forest Management Standards (IFMS), a set of eight comprehensive guidelines and rules applicable to all states. This marks the first time that scientists have developed such standards for forest management in India that are measurable for results. These standards have been developed from the Bhopal-India process, which is one of

the nine global initiatives for sustainable forest management principles. AS Rawat, director general of ICFRE, Dehradun, said, "Under the NWPC, state forest departments are required to engage in continuous data collection and updating, ensuring that forests are managed in a consistent manner across the country. The eight standards are holistic as they independently focus upon soil and water conservation, forest resources, and enhancement of the social, economic, and cultural aspects related to forests."

The principles of sustainable forest management have been included in the forest management planning in the country and the field data collection techniques have been brought in sync with techniques followed by Forest Survey of India, Dehradun, to have uniformity throughout the country.

The code was launched by CP Goyal, director general of forests and special secretary, ministry of environment, forest and climate change and other senior officers of the ministry at ICFRE on Saturday. These eight standards are, "Maintenance/increase in the extent and condition of forest and tree cover. Maintenance, conservation and enhancement of biodiversity including wildlife. Maintenance and enhancement of forest health and vitality together with establishment of regeneration. Soil and water conservation. Maintenance and enhancement of forest resource productivity. Optimisation of forest resource utilisations. Maintenance and enhancement of social, economic, cultural benefits and adequacy of policy, legal and institutional framework," added a senior authority from ICFRE.