

## Eco Club coordinators get green lessons from IFGTB

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In a move to spread the message of conservation and nature education among the young minds, the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB) in Coimbatore took a unique step by imparting training to teachers who coordinate the activities of Eco Club in the schools in the district. As many as 33 teachers nominated by the office of Chief Education Officer (CEO) took part in a three-day training programme on ‘Biodiversity Conservation and Nature Education’ that concluded on Thursday. “The main objective of the training is to develop biodiversity consciousness, and impart action oriented biodiversity education methods, hands on activities and exposure visits to the Eco Club coordinators. It is expected that the trained teachers would in turn become master trainers and motivate and educate students to protect and conserve local biodiversity,” said an official from the IFGTB. The participating teachers were trained on biodiversity and conservation, impacts of climate change and wetlands biodiversity. They visited the Fischer’s Herbarium and the Gass Forest Museum in IFGTB to learn the importance of natural history as a tool of education. New teaching methodologies in nature education were imparted to the participants



through videos and films. The participants were taken on an exclusive one-day field trip to Baralikadu Eco-tourism Centre to learn on the community initiatives in biodiversity conservation. The participants learnt about the significance of ecosystem services that help forest dwelling communities to earn additional livelihood through eco-tourism initiatives. Mohit Gera, Director of IFGTB, felicitated R. Sathy,

Headmistress of the Panchayat Union Primary School, Malumichampati, who received the national award for the best teacher in 2017. Addressing teachers, Mr. Gera emphasised on the need to adapt creative teaching methodologies to make nature education more attractive to the Eco Club students. He said that all the trained teachers were to become ambassadors to inspire students through wide range of activities in the Eco Clubs. Mr. Gera also released a training manual on ‘Biodiversity Conservation and Nature Education’. Besides the manual, the participants were given booklets on endangered mammals and plants of India. P. Ayyannan, CEO of Coimbatore, and N. Geetha, District Education Officer, participated in the valedictory session. The training was sponsored by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, under the umbrella scheme of ‘Forestry Training and Capacity Building- Training of other Stakeholders’.

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