

Forests form an important foundation for a green economy

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Forests are a foundation of a green economy sustaining a wide range of sectors and livelihoods. Forest landscapes play a critical role in tackling climate change and provide a broad range of ecosystem services.

“If the resources are accessed in such a way that forests continue to be cared for and nurtured, then these green powerhouses can be a triple-win opportunity—good for profits, the planet, and the people,” Dr Ashwini Chhatre, professor of public policy at the Indian School of Business, said.

“Our estimate is that the forest economy initiative can enable the transformation of livelihoods of over 200 million forest-dependent people. We expect the forest economy to be a multi-billion-dollar opportunity at the very least,” he added

The ISB-BIPP’s ‘Initiative on the Forest Economy’ (IoFE) is built on the three pillars of security of tenure, economies of scale, and assured market linkages. It aspires to create a landscape-scale sustainable and thriving forest economy by enabling sustainable management of forests and improved livelihoods for over 200 million forest-dependent people across India.

“The forest economy model will thrive on multi-stakeholder partnerships amongst –industry, as purchasers of raw material at scale from community enterprises, large-scale women-led enterprises as secure suppliers of the raw materials that are sustainably sourced from community-owned & managed forests and government, as institutions governing and providing the ownership incentive (secure tenure or Community Forest Resource Rights under Forests Rights Act, 2006) to the forest-dependent communities,” he said.

Ashwini added that industry leaders and state governments are coming together in amplifying this opportunity. This effort is incubated at the Indian School of Business, through facilitation in operationalizing the model and bringing the forest economy stakeholders together.

As there is increased participation from the stakeholders across the country, the model will facilitate large-scale regeneration and preservation of forests for secure sources of energy and fossil fuel substitutes, support biodiversity management of eco-systems, and enable the transformation of livelihoods of over 200mn forest-dependent people.

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