

Connecting Policy and Finance for Landscape Restoration in Gujarat under RECAP4NDC

(A workshop jointly organized by GIZ India, TERI and
Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Policy Research and International Studies,
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda for RECAP4NDC)

Place: Grand Mercure Surya Palace Vadodara, Gujarat
Date: 9th September 2025, Tuesday

India's commitments at United Nations on Climate Change and Land Degradation

India has made significant international commitments to combat climate change and land degradation under agreements UNFCCC and UNCCD. A key national goal is to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) by restoring 26 million hectares by 2030, a commitment that directly supports India's Nationally Determined Contribution goal of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent through increased forest and tree cover by 2030.

Projects such as '**Restore, Conserve and Protect Forest and Tree Cover for NDC Implementation in India (RECAP4NDC)**' can become catalysts to further strengthen and contribute towards these commitments. This project is an Indo-German bilateral technical cooperation project, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) and implemented by a powerful consortium led by GIZ, alongside IUCN, TERI, FSI, ICFRE, and ICIMOD.

The project is an example to deconstruct the meaning of the commitments made at the respective international fora to tackle impacts of climate change as well as achieve land degradation neutrality. The project's mission is to support India in achieving its restoration targets, thereby improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities and farmers. It is being implemented in key states, including Gujarat, Maharashtra, Delhi-NCR, and Uttarakhand. In Gujarat it focuses on the unique challenges of the region's diverse landscapes—such as Aravalli mountain ranges, grasslands, mangroves, and mudflats—and addresses specific pressures like coastal degradation and grazing. In Gujarat, the project is actively engaged in the **Bhavnagar, Sabarkantha, and Banaskantha** districts.

Amongst various stakeholders Universities have enormous potential to contribute to such national processes of fulfilling the international commitments. NEP, 2020 promotes the involvement of academicians and students to conduct studies at local to national levels to develop the knowledge base necessary to deconstruct the meaning of international commitments in national context. But there is a need to build capacities of the educational institutions to understand the procedures of international conventions, mechanisms of putting across the views, conduct studies as a follow up of defined outcomes of the negotiations.

This workshop is designed as a foundational platform to bridge this gap. It aims to connect the RECAP4NDC project's objectives and activities in Gujarat with the academic and research strengths of The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, a key stakeholder in the region's development.

Workshop Objectives

This workshop is being organized by the RECAP4NDC project in partnership with AIPRIS to:

- Understand India's international commitments on climate and land (UNFCCC, UNCCD) are being translated into action through the RECAP4NDC project.
- Introduce the RECAP4NDC project's goals, strategies, and ongoing activities in Gujarat to a multi-disciplinary academic audience.
- Identify concrete opportunities for collaboration between the project and MSU faculty and students in areas like policy research, scientific assessment, and socio-economic impact studies.
- Build a network of academic experts and future professionals who can contribute to the knowledge base required for successful Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) in Gujarat.
- Identify opportunities to finance restoration from various sources like CSR, Public Finance, Public Private Partnerships, Convergence, Carbon Finance, etc.
- Explore livelihood and capacity development opportunities for the tribal and forest dependent communities.

Participation

The workshop aims to bring together key stakeholders crucial for the success of landscape restoration in Gujarat, including:

- University teachers and students from relevant disciplines
- Officials from key state government departments
- Representatives from the RECAP4NDC project consortium
- Corporates, NGOs, practitioners, financing institutions, etc

Agenda

Duration	Schedule
0930-1000 hrs	Registration
1000-1005 hrs	Welcome by Prof. (Dr) Amit Dholakia, AIPRIS
1005-1040 hrs	<p>Light Lamp and University Anthem</p> <p>Address by Prof. (Dr) Bhalchandra Mahadeo Bhanage, Vice Chancellor, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (TBC)</p> <p>Brief About RECAP4NDC Project by Dr Alejandro von Bertrab, Project Director, RECAP4NDC, GIZ (TBC)</p> <p>Context Setting by Dr JV Sharma, IFS (retd) Senior Director, Land Resources Division, TERI</p> <p>Special Remarks by Shri S. K. Srivastava, IFS Addl. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, APCCF - PMU</p> <p>Inaugural Address by Dr A.P. Singh, IFS PCCF & Head of Forest Force, Gujarat</p>
1040-1045 hrs	Workshop Objectives: Building Synergies for RECAP4NDC in Gujarat – Prof. (Dr) Yogesh V. Gokhale , AIPRIS
1045-1100 hrs	Tea Break
1100-1130 hrs	Global Commitments for Local Action: The MEA Framework Underpinning the Land Degradation, Biodiversity Conservation and Climate Change – Prof. (Dr) M. V. Shiju
1145-1215 hrs	Means of implementation for realising commitments under international conventions (UNFCCC, UNCCD, CBD, Ramsar, UNFF, etc.), Dr JV Sharma and Mr Shailesh Ganeshrao Tembhurnikar
1215-1245 hrs	Evaluation of Policy Paradigm to tackle climate change and Land Degradation in India: Case for RECAP4NDC, Mr Kundan Burnwal
1245-1400 hrs	Lunch
1400-1500 hrs	<p>RECAP4NDC – Implementing FLR measures in Gujarat in selected model sites – Aravalli Mountain Range, Sabarkantha & Banaskantha, Grassland and Mangrove in Bhavnagar</p> <p>Mr Shwetal Shah GIZ India, Mr Raj Parmar IUCN, Mr Ronak Gadhvi TERI, Dr Moh. Shahid, ICFRE</p>
1500-1515 hrs	Multi-Sectoral Financing Streams for Landscape Restoration and under RECAP4NDC, Mr Varun Grover, Fellow, TERI
1515-1600 hrs	<p>Panel Discussion – Opportunities of Collaboration for RECAP4NDC : Perspective from Government of Gujarat</p> <p>Chair: Mr Shailesh Ganeshrao Tembhurnikar, IFS (retd), Distinguished Fellow, TERI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Anshuman Sharma, Managing Director, Gujarat State Forest Development Corporation (GSFDC) • Mr C R Meena, Head, TRIFED, Gujarat • Mr Manoj Harchandani NABARD, DDM Sabarkantha

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Satish Srivastav, Chairman, Seed Foundation • Mr Kundan Burnwal, Deputy Lead, RECAP4NDC, Special Remarks
1600-1615 hrs	Tea Break
1615-1700 hrs	<p>Panel Discussion – Forging Pathways: How can MSU Baroda Collaborate with the RECAP4NDC Project</p> <p>Chair: Prof. Amit Dholakia, Director AIPRIS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Padmanabhi Nagar, Department of Botany, MSU Baroda • Prof Virendra Singh, Department of Sociology, MSU Baroda • Prof Sanskriti Mujumdar, Institute of Climate Change and Research, MSU Baroda • Prof Padmaja S. Pamidimukkala, Department of Environmental Studies • Dr K M Chudasama, Registrar, MSU (TBC) • Dr Alejandro von Bertrab, Special Remarks (TBC)
1700-1705 hrs	Vote of Thanks Prof Yogesh V Gokhale, AIPRIS, MSU Baroda