

INSTITUTE OF WOOD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, BANGALORE

BHARAT KA AMRUT MAHOTSAV – 75th YEAR OF INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATION

A report on webinar on Agriwood Certification: Overcoming a trade barrier (1st August 2022)

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is an initiative of the Government of India to celebrate and commemorate 75 years of Independence of progressive India and the glorious history of its people, culture and achievements. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Sri.Narendra Modi inaugurated 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebration by flagging off 'Dandi March' from Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad on 12th March 2021, 75 weeks before our 75th anniversary of Independence and will end past a year on 15th August 2023.

As part of this celebration, ICFRE is conducting various programs like technical series, workshops, exhibitions, documentary shows, poster and essay competitions, cycle rallies etc. As part of Week 70 to 75 celebration of Bharat Ka Amrut Mahotsav, the Institute conducted a webinar on **“Agriwood Certification: Overcoming a trade barrier” on 1st August 2022.**

Shri. A.S. Rawat,IFS., Director General, ICFRE was the Chief Guest of the programme. The Guest of Honours were Shri. Bivas Ranjan, IFS, ADG (Wildlife and Forest Policy), MoEF&CC and Shri. Sanjay Pant, DDG, Bureau of Indian Standards. Special Guest of the programme were Dr. H.D. Kulkarni, Vice President (Plantation) (Retd.), ITC, Shri. Jaydeep Chitlangia, Secretary General, FIPPI and Shri. Jikesh Thakkar, Executive Director, AIPM. Other participants included representatives from wood based industries, State Forest Department, forest Development Corporation etc. The Programme started with the address by Mr. C.M. Shivakumar, IFS, Head and Extension Division who welcomed the participants.

On behalf of the “Agriwood Standards” drafting committee, Dr. H.R. Prabuddha, IFS., made a presentation on ‘Agriwood standard for the certification of wood produced on farmlands. In his presentation, he highlighted that the existing International Certifications Systems are mainly focused on Certification from forests and such certification systems cannot be used for the wood produced from agroforestry system in India. In India, more than 90% of raw material

consumed by wood based industries is coming from Trees Outside Forests (ToF) area for which no certification system is in place. So, in order to promote certification of wood produced from the farm fields, there is a need to come up with Indian Certification Scheme mainly focusing on establishing legality of the wood by means of certificate of ownership and chain of custody certification. He gave detailed account on Certificate of Origin and Certificate of Ownership system by using IT based solutions.

Shri. A.S. Rawat, Director General, ICFRE , in his inaugural address, complimented IWST for coming up with agriwood standards for promotion of agriwood in the Country. He also highlighted that there is a need to use information based technology tools for cost effective implementation of agriwood standards in the country.

Shri. Sanjay Pant, DDG, Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) highlighted about works carried out in the past by BIS in respect of various standards developed for different processes and products. He further added that there is a need to come up with certification system for certification of wood in India. He assured that he will put this issue on fast track mode to come up with certification system which is simple and acceptable across the globe.

Shri. Shiv S. Phanse, Forest Governance Expert suggested that there should be due diligence in mixing the certified and non-certified while developing a product, as it may not be acceptable in any International market.

Shri. O.P. Singh, APCCF, Orissa Forest Department explained that there is a need to come up with industry friendly wood based industry guidelines and we should collectively work in meeting demand and supply gap for wood and wood products in the country.

Dr. H.D. Kulkarni gave a series of inputs to make robust certifying system for the agriwood on the lines of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) which are based on 3 pillars of sustainability i.e, environmental, economical and social principles. In this regard, Director, IWST Dr. M.P. Singh argued that coming up with certification standard covering sustainable standard principles make certifying system very complex and cost prohibitive and it may discourage Indian farmers to adopt it. So he opined that the proposed draft of Agriwood standards mainly covers legality of wood and

certificate of ownership which will be implemented through IT solutions. These views were endorsed by Dr. C.N. Pandey, Technical Advisor, FIPPI.

After hearing all these arguments and discussions, Shri. Sanjay Pant, DDG, BSI said that he is having complete clarity on making legal certifying system simple which will be acceptable to the farmers and in the International market.

Shri. C.M. Shivakumar, Head Extension proposed vote of thanks.



