

तिष्यरक्षित चटर्जी  
Dr. Tishya Chatterjee



सत्यमेव जयते

सचिव  
भारत सरकार  
पर्यावरण एवं वन मंत्रालय  
Secretary  
Government of India  
Ministry of Environment and Forests

## MESSAGE

We are at the crossroads of human civilization, where the need to conserve our natural resources must be carefully balanced with the growing demands of our people for enjoying the fruits of development. Development has its own cost that manifests in industrial/vehicular pollution, depletion of resources and increase in urbanization, yet pristine nature has to be preserved not just for aesthetics but to preserve ground water, ensure hydro-cycles, sequester carbon and for providing subsistence to posterity and their economy. Forest conservation, the sustainable use of its products and sharing of benefits among the forest community and producers of forest produce are the cornerstone of our forest policy. Forests are our only stock resource and if that is used as a flow resource, we will destroy nature's effective eco-system.

To improve our forests in a measurable way, we must know where we stand. The landscape of our country ranges from mighty peaks that do not support vegetation to the thick forests in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and North East. If we know well the range of our forests, and the physiographic zones into which they are distributed, we shall know where the scope lies to expand our forest cover. For this very reason, accurate forest cover assessment is a prerequisite.

The Forest Survey of India has been carrying out assessment of forest resources of the country using the most modern technology in field of remote sensing and GIS. Over a period of time, it has helped planners, policy makers in getting a realistic picture of the country's forest resources and evolve suitable strategy for their conservation and management. I am sure the information presented in the SFR 2011 shall be made good use of by all the stakeholders committed to the protection and conservation of forests against the challenges of the times.

(Dr. T. Chatterjee)

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वन महानिदेशक एवं विशेष सचिव  
भारत सरकार  
पर्यावरण एवं वन मंत्रालय

DIRECTOR GENERAL OF FOREST & SPL. SECY.  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS

## MESSAGE

Forests have been with us since the dawn of civilization. Nevertheless, the incapacity of human life to survive without forests is a recent realization. A number of factors have worked to bring about this shift in the perception of humanity. Recent phenomena like shifting rainfall patterns, climate change and their effect on vegetation and the human race, have raised concerns about the very viability of civilization if the drift is allowed to go unchecked. Industrial growth is a reality of our age. It is essential to let the fruits of technological advancement percolate down to the lowest strata of society. However, a balance has to be struck between development and conservation. It has been suggested by experts that in the ideal situation, one-third of the land surface should be devoted to each of industry, agriculture and natural ecosystems if the self-sustaining renewable capacity of the Earth is to be maintained. This should further reinforce our belief in a symbiotic relationship between humans and the environment.

Coming to the issue of assessment of forest resources in our country, the journey of the State of Forests Report is a reflection of the importance of forests. In the year 1987, FSI produced forest cover map using Landsat imagery on one million scale and a minimum mappable area of 400 ha. It has now advanced to interpretation of satellite data received from the indigenous IRS-P6-LISS III sensor on a resolution of 23.5m with a minimum mappable area of one hectare. The interpretation has moved from visual to digital. The advancement in technology has helped in making more accurate assessment of forests, picking up small patches and gaps that were earlier overlooked. Needless to say, it has strengthened the mechanism of forest monitoring. We are pleased with these advancements in technology, but we should constantly strive to meet the challenges of our age through constant upgradation of our skills, and a concomitant strengthening of our capabilities on the ground.

This occasion of the release of the India Forest Report 2011 is an opportune time to rededicate ourselves to the conservation of our forest resources and to the use of this priceless gift of nature in a manner that brings the greatest good to all our people. I complement DG FSI and his dedicated team in taking out this report on time, and look forward to many more such achievements in the future.

(Dr. P.J. Dilip Kumar)