

## Saving forests for business, climate and communities in the northern Western Ghats of India

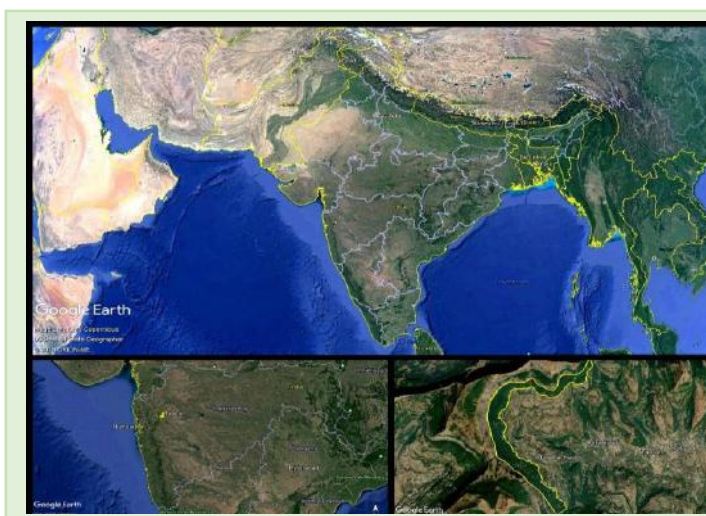
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Jayant Sarnaik is founder member and joint director of AERF. Mr. Sarnaik has 18 years of experience in community-based conservation in the Western Ghats of India. His area of expertise lies in developing innovative approaches and solutions to address the cross-cutting issues of energy, biodiversity and climate change.

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### Geographic and demographic information



Country	India
Province	Maharashtra
District	Pune
Size of geographical area	30 km <sup>2</sup>
Number of indirect beneficiaries	10,000 Men: approx. 5,500 Women : approx. 4,500
Dominant ethnicity	Hindu-Mahadeo Koli – Indigenous community



Size of project area	10 km <sup>2</sup>
Number of direct beneficiaries	2,356 Men: Approx-1,200 Women: 1,156
Geographic coordinates (longitude and latitude)	19°17'54.24"N 73°45'57.87"E
Dominant ethnicity	Hindu, Mahadeo Koli -indigenous community

## Ecosystem Types

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Forest	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Grassland	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agricultural		In-land water
	Coastal		Dryland	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mountain		Urban/peri-urban

## Important species in the site

English common name (Local name)	Scientific name	Description
Indian giant squirrel	<i>Ratufa indica</i>	Canopy dependent mammal, important disperser and indicator of healthy forest
Haritaki	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	Important medicinal tree in Indian system of traditional medicine( Ayurveda). Economically very important
White cheeked barbet		Bird endemic to the Western Ghats of India.
South western langur	<i>Semnopithecus hypoleucos</i>	Primate species threatened by habitat loss mainly forests.
Tytlers leaf warbler	<i>Phylloscopus tytleri</i>	Bird belonging to IUCN redlist category of Near Threatened (NT)
Shendri	<i>Mallotus phillipinensis</i>	Economically important tree. Fruits used for natural color extraction.



## General introduction

This is a new project site in the northern Western Ghats identified for long term conservation by AERF. Important characteristics of the site include- forest dependent communities, presence of community owned and managed healthy forest, presence of many endemic birds and mammals indicating need for long term conservation. Key challenges faced by the location and people are- lack of better economic opportunities related to forests, degradation of forests due to energy needs, migration of young generation. AERF has initiated a project at this site about nine months ago for building a strong business case for saving these forests. Abundant availability of the medicinal tree- *Terminalia chebula* fruits of which find application in herbal tea making in Europe can attract private sector investment in conservation and sustainable use of the forests from this region. The forests have old growth trees which store and sequester large amount of carbon. The local communities have been traditionally collecting and selling fruits of *Terminalia chebula*. Thus the site has all the necessary ingredients for linking conservation with green economy. We have so far completed detailed biodiversity assessment, resource assessment of target species- *Terminalia chebula* ,and energy profile surveys in 3 villages from this site.



Valley forest in Nimgiri-Talmachi



Local farmer collecting fruits of *Terminalia chebula*

### Contribution to Aichi Biodiversity Targets' Strategic Goal A

		Breakdown Target	How did you measure the outcome?	Result
Strategic Goal A	TARGET 1	People are aware of the values of biodiversity	Socio-economic survey among the target communities.	Local communities care only about economically important plants and non-timber forest produce.
		People are aware of the steps they can take to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity	Awareness generation and orientation workshops, cost benefit analysis of destructive use.	After knowing the intricate relationship between biodiversity conservation , food security and sustainable livelihoods and receiving compensation for sustainable biodiversity use, the communities have agreed to adopt sustainable forest management practices.
	TARGET 2	Biodiversity values integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies		
		Biodiversity values integrated into national and local planning processes		
		Biodiversity values incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate		
		Biodiversity values incorporated into reporting systems		
	TARGET 3	Incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity, eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts		
		Positive incentives for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity developed and applied	Stakeholder analysis, threat assessment, opportunity costs of conservation survey	It turns out that at this particular site, there is no understanding of economics of deforestation however it is important to provide direct incentives to local communities so that they are able to perceive the benefits of conservation and can commit to conservation as a land use. AERF has succeeded in convincing the local communities at this site for long term conservation in lieu of livelihood opportunities and direct incentives.
	TARGET 4	Governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve, or have implemented, plans for sustainable production and consumption...	Feasibility study for setting up supply chain driven conservation initiative. Consultations have been conducted with financial institution such as Credit Suisse for support	AERF is working with UK's leading herbal tea maker for establishing supply chain of Haritaki. A processing facility will be set up for value addition and maximizing economic benefits from the resource which will result in higher income for the local communities.
		... and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits		

### Relations to other Aichi Biodiversity Target & SDGs

Please indicate the Aichi Biodiversity Targets other than the targets your working group focuses and SDGs that your activities contribute to if any. Use “●” and “■” to indicate the “direct” or “indirect” contributions to the targets.

CBD Aichi Biodiversity Targets (<https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/>)

Strategic Goal A				Strategic Goal B					
	●	●	●						
Strategic Goal C			Strategic Goal D			Strategic Goal E			
■			■						

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>)

		●						
			●		●		●	

### Any difficulties you found during your assessment

No

### Key messages for the CBD in planning for the post-2020 Targets

It is becoming increasingly difficult to emphasize the importance of biodiversity as life supporting system on earth. Climate change has dominated the agenda of the discussion at high level meetings and it continues to get maximum attention from the key stakeholder groups including governments. It is critical that a major initiative is undertaken to mainstream biodiversity in important economic sectors otherwise it will be difficult to achieve the targets set for 2020 and beyond.