

IISc. to prepare biodiversity mapping of Permude GP area

- Special Correspondent



T. V. Ramachandra

The Centre for Ecological Sciences at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc.), Bengaluru, will prepare the biodiversity mapping of Permude Gram Panchayat area soon, according to T.V. Ramachandra, a scientist at the centre.

Speaking at a workshop on 'Biodiversity and natural resources' organised by St. Aloysius College here on Saturday, he said that a survey of biodiversity under the jurisdiction of the panchayat would be conducted for two days from Sunday.

Mr. Ramachandra said that there was a proposal to set up industries covering the Permude Gram Panchayat area under the Mangaluru Special Economic Zone. The government could take a call based on the study report by the IISc.

He said that gram panchayats should prepare a people's biodiversity register under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. It is a gram panchayat-level register that documented local biodiversity and the local community's traditional knowledge on biodiversity including its conservation and traditional uses. But most gram panchayats in the country did not prepare it. The register helped gram panchayats take decisions.

Replying to a question from a participant, Mr. Ramachandra disagreed with the government's claim that the tree cover in the country was increasing.

"They [some government officials] are considering even area under paddy as tree cover," he said adding that independent researchers should come forward to conduct a field study and prove how some of the claims of government officials were misleading.

Unless independent researchers proved the reality with accurate data, the government believed the data provided by its officials.

"They [government officials] are giving wrong data. There is a need to counter it with facts," Mr. Ramachandra said adding that tree cover in many districts was coming down. "For example, it was down by 45 per cent in Shivamogga district," he said.

Mr. Ramachandra said that there should be seven trees per person.

The three-day workshop organised by the college included field study for its students. A team of resource persons from the IISc. spoke on different aspects of biodiversity.

They spoke on documentation of biodiversity, data management and publication. The students and faculty of the college were informed about the methods of assessing village biodiversity, undertaking biodiversity studies of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.

Swebert D'Silva, principal of the college, was present.

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