

DECCAN Chronicle *On The Web*

Published on Deccan Chronicle (<http://www.deccanchronicle.com>)

Demarcate lakes, stop land grab: IISc panel

Jan 10 2011

Jan. 9: The demarcation of lake boundaries to prevent encroachments and the participation of the public and school kids in lake conservation efforts will help save these water bodies, said the recommendations made by IISc researchers, based on the papers presented at Lake Symposium 2010 held in December last week.

Lake 2010 was the 7th Biennial Lake Conference which focussed on “Wetlands, Biodiversity and Climate Change.” It was held to commemorate the International Year of Biodiversity. The researchers at IISc put together the recommendations based on over 150 scientific paper presentations on wetlands, made during the three-day-long seminar. The recommendations will be sent to various government agencies involved in lake management and protection in Bengaluru.

Some of the key recommendations of the Lake symposium include the documentation of biodiversity of every water body which should become part of the school, college and People’s Biodiversity Registers. The recommendation committee also wanted local Biodiversity Management Committees (BMC) to be strengthened by giving them more financial support and scientific assistance to document lake diversity.

The Committee felt policy makers had a lot more to do to combat climate change. Besides greening the city, the traditional sacred groves must be developed or existing ones must be preserved in the interest of water bodies, it said.

Head of Committee, Dr T V Ramachandra from Energy and Wetland Research Group, IISc, said that the government must take up the demarcation of the boundaries of water bodies on an urgent basis to protect them from encroachments.

“The existing regulations pertaining to boundary demarcations within different states, need to be reviewed according to updated norms and based on geomorphology and other scientific aspects pertaining to individual water bodies. The maximum water level should be the boundary line of the water body. In addition, a specified width based on historical records/ survey records should be considered for creating a buffer zone around the water body,” Dr Ramachandra said.

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