

1st South Asian Agroforestry and Trees Outside Forests Congress Concludes in Delhi

Category: Business

written by News Mall | February 7, 2026



- Two-day Congress TREESCAPES 2026 Reimagined Agroforestry in South Asia
- Deliberations by Foreign Agri Ministers, experts on agroforestry's contribution to climate resiliency, farmers' livelihood, tree-based entrepreneurship and economic growth

The Centre for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), in collaboration with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), successfully concluded TREESCAPES 2026, the 1st South Asian Agroforestry &

Trees Outside Forests (AF-TOF) Congress, held from 5th to 7th February 2026 at the Bharat Ratna C. Subramaniam Auditorium, National Agricultural Science Complex (NASC), Pusa Campus, New Delhi. The three-day regional congress aims to emerge as a landmark platform for collective deliberation on strengthening tree-based agriculture and trees outside forest systems to enhance climate resilience, restore landscapes, and improve agricultural livelihoods across South Asia and was graced by eminent dignitaries, including Dr Madan Prasad Pariyar, Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Development, Government of Nepal; and Mr Ahmed Hassan Didi, Hon'ble Minister of State for Agriculture and Animal Welfare, Republic of Maldives; along with senior officials from India and other South Asian countries.



Dr. M.L. Jat, Secretary (DARE) and Director General, ICAR and Mr. Manoj Dabas, India Country Director, CIFOR-ICRAF, during TREESCAPES 2026

Speaking on the occasion Dr M.L. Jat, Secretary (DARE) & DG

(ICAR), stated, “Asia is home to some of the world’s most climate-vulnerable agricultural systems, yet it also holds immense potential to lead in nature-based economic transformation. Recent regional studies show that agroforestry has helped reduce deforestation and avoid tens of millions of tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions annually while supporting rural livelihoods. TREESCAPES demonstrates that scaling success will depend on unlocking green finance, empowering local institutions, and integrating youth and women into extension and entrepreneurship models. For South Asia, tree-based agriculture is not just about restoring landscapes – it is about future-proofing rural economies.”

Mr. Manoj Dabas, India Country Director, CIFOR-ICRAF further stated, “India’s tree-based systems already account for nearly 20 percent of national carbon stocks, yet the country continues to import over USD 7 billion worth of wood and wood-based products annually, growing at double-digit rates. This contradiction highlights a massive missed opportunity. TREESCAPES has brought together evidence showing that tree-based agriculture can reduce import dependence, strengthen rural incomes for India’s 86 percent marginal farmers, and deliver measurable climate outcomes. The next phase of growth will depend on aligning carbon markets, digital traceability, and private-sector procurement with farmer realities. Agroforestry must be positioned not as an environmental add-on, but as core rural infrastructure.”

The two-day Congress brought together policymakers, senior government officials, researchers, industry leaders, financial institutions, civil society organizations, farmers, and youth from across South Asia, with discussions focussing on **strengthening policy and regulatory frameworks, expanding forest certification with greater smallholder integration, and leveraging agroforestry and Trees Outside Forests (TOF) for**

climate resilience and ecosystem services among others. In addition to featuring high-level thematic sessions focused on digital and geospatial innovations for agroforestry, water-secure and multifunctional landscapes, capacity building and extension systems, and enhancing trees in urban landscapes, the Congress also included four plenaries and a dedicated ministerial hour, underscoring strong political commitment to mainstreaming agroforestry and Trees Outside Forests across South Asia.

With India's push towards a green economy in sync with its 2070 net-zero goals, TREESCAPES 2026 highlighted the need for stronger institutional collaboration and PPP partnerships to address implementation opportunities and scale agroforestry sustainably in India by positioning itself as a pivotal platform in encouraging further effective implementation of agroforestry as a means of increasing tree cover and improving farmers' incomes and livelihoods as we move towards a more climate-resilient future.

About Treescapes

TREESCAPES 2026 is being organised jointly by CIFOR-ICRAF and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), with the ICAR-Central Agroforestry Research Institute (CAFRI), Jhansi, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), and the Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Bhopal, as Organising Partners.

The Thematic Partners for TREESCAPES 2026 include GIZ, Haryana Forest Development Corporation, ITC Limited, The Nature Conservancy, Intellectap, International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Indian Society of Agroforestry, and IORA Ecological Solutions. The National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS) and the Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS) are the

Knowledge Partners in the Congress.

With India's push towards a green economy in sync with its 2070 net-zero goals buoyed by the country's reforestation drive (recently driven by Gujarat), TREESCAPES 2026 positions itself as a pivotal platform in encouraging further effective implementation of agroforestry as a means of increasing tree cover and improving farmers' incomes and livelihoods as we move towards a more climate-resilient future

About CIFOR-ICRAF

CIFOR-ICRAF The Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (www.cifor-icraf.org), harnesses the power of trees, forests and agroforestry landscapes to address the most pressing global challenges of our time – biodiversity loss, climate change, food security, livelihoods and inequality. CIFOR and ICRAF are CGIAR Research Centers. CIFOR-ICRAF delivers demand-driven evidence of the ways trees can revitalize both landscapes and livelihoods. Born of the merger of the most trusted research organizations on forests, trees and agroforestry – the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and World Agroforestry (ICRAF) – CIFOR-ICRAF harnesses a combined 70 years of expertise and extensive partnership networks across Africa, Asia and Latin America.

For more information, please visit www.cifor-icraf.org/event/treescaples-2026.

