

International Conference at CUO concludes with an emphasis on achieving self-reliance by conserving Biodiversity and Agriculture for a Sustainable Future

The School of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources at the Central University of Odisha recently concluded its two-day International Conference on "Recent Advances of Biodiversity and Agriculture for a Sustainable Future" on 20 April 2024. Held at the University's main campus, the event brought together scholars and scientists to delve into critical topics surrounding biodiversity and agrobiodiversity.

Key takeaways from the conference include the recognition that biodiversity and agrobiodiversity serve as vital resources crucial for both present and future generations. Experts emphasized that these resources are intricately linked to the life and livelihood of people, underscoring the need for their conservation and sustainable management.

Furthermore, discussions highlighted the role of bioprospecting in enhancing biodiversity conservation. By valuing natural resources, discovering medicinal compounds, and understanding ecosystem functions, bioprospecting can promote sustainability while ensuring fair benefits for local communities and preserving indigenous knowledge.

The concept of the bio-economy, which involves sustainable economic activities utilizing biological resources, was also explored. By linking biodiversity with bioprospecting, participants noted the potential to add value to resources such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and biotechnology. These practices align with circular economy principles, aid environmental conservation efforts, and enhance livelihoods, ultimately contributing to the preservation of biodiversity and agrobiodiversity.

The valedictory function, chaired by Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor Prof. Chakradhar Tripathi, emphasized the need for biodiversity research to uplift the economic standard of the common man, thus fostering self-reliance in the country.

Prof. S.K. Palita, Dean of the School of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources, presented the outcomes of the conference including information on presentation of 29 research papers from invited speakers and 102 posters from research scholars. Omprakash Mahamta, Suraj Kumar Padhi and Ankita Das were adjudged first, second and third for their outstanding poster presentations.

Eminent personalities, including Prof. S. P. Adhikari, former Vice-Chancellor, F.M. University, Balasore and Prof. M.K. Satapathy, former Professor of Science, Regional Institute of Education, Bhubaneswar were present, and Prof. Satapathy was felicitated for his significant contributions to biodiversity research. The Vice-Chancellor also felicitated different NGOs who participated in the Millet Exhibitions, local ayurvedic specialist and rapporteurs of the technical sessions and research scholars of the School of BCNR.

Dr. Kakoli Banerjee, Co-convener, delivered the welcome address while Dr. Debabrata Panda, Convener, expressed gratitude to all participants, invited guests, and session chairs for the success of the International Conference.

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