



Tropical Rainforest  
Ecological Camp (R)



*2022-2023*

# ANNUAL REPORT

# *Tropical Rainforest Ecological Camp (TREC)<sup>®</sup>*

## **FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT:**

Firstly, we are profoundly grateful to all those who have steadfastly supported our work, including our dedicated team members, committed interns, and selfless volunteers. During this reporting period, we have focused our efforts on nature education, research, and sustainable tourism.

Our primary objective is to make a positive impact on nature and society. Our work is steered by a robust set of values that mirror our identity as an organization in perpetual dialogue with the principles of democratic participation, transparency, good governance, creativity, and unwavering commitment.

In the upcoming year, TREC is eager to forge closer ties with other organizations operating in the realm of environment and community livelihood development. We warmly welcome the guidance and suggestions of the readers of this annual report, and we are deeply appreciative of everyone's active participation and support.

Sd/.  
Balachandra Hegde.

President.

# ABOUT US

The Tropical Rainforest Ecological Camp (TREC), is a registered non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the most vulnerable and important natural areas of northern Western Ghats in North Canara, Karnataka, through conservation efforts on the ground. Our mission is to safeguard biodiversity hotspots, restore degraded ecosystems, create awareness of nature conservation, and promote sustainable environmental policies.

Our mission is to foster a love for nature through exciting activities like treks, nature walks, expeditions, and camps. We also conduct research and provide support to researchers studying the natural world.

## TEAM :-

### THE KEYS

- Mr. Balachandra Sayimane:

President, Co-Founder and conservationist, associated with TREC. He is a Landscape Ecologist and practising farmer living in a remote village near Sirsi, Uttara Kannada district. His farming practices are deeply rooted in sustainable agriculture, focusing on organic methods and biodiversity conservation. He did his International Master's (M.Sc.) in Landscape Ecology and Nature Conservation from the University of Greifswald, Germany. He also completed short training courses related to 'Sustainable Forest Management, Biodiversity Conservation and Monitoring, Restoration Ecology, MSP in Process in Natural Resources Management, and NTFP from Wageningen University, The Netherlands, Los Banos University of Philippines, University of Bolzano-Bozen, Italy, NAAN-WAU, Nepal and MOST-INBAR, China. He was awarded several fellowships, including Nuffic (The Netherlands), ITTO (Japan), GETIDOS-Getting Things Done Sustainably (Germany), and a Kinship fellowship in the USA. He regularly writes about ecology and sustainable agriculture in the local language. He was awarded the CAM Agricultural Media award for best agriculture feature in 2007. Besides farming, he has been actively involved in wildlife and nature conservation in the Western Ghats for the last fifteen years. He played a crucial role in declaring four conservation reserves in Uttara Kannada district. (Dandeli-Anshi Tiger reserve, Hornbill conservation reserve, Bedthi-Aghanashini conservation reserve and Kathalekaan-LTM conservation reserve). He has been nominated as Honorary Wildlife Warden for Uttara Kannada district. He is studying land use change, ecosystem services and conservation prospects in the Western Ghats region. He is responsible for the conservation section at TREC.

- Dr. Narasimha Hegde:

Trustee and Director of TREC. After earning his M.Sc. and Professional Masters; he has been honored with Ph.D. from the University of Greifswald, Germany. He has 25 years of expertise in research, data management, analysis, and report publishing on gender and forestry, biomass, clean energy, and sustainable agriculture. He led ecological restoration projects in wetland forests using participatory approaches and carbon financing, and promoted collaborative governance for forest management. Dr. Hegde conducted impact evaluations, yield gap studies, and environmental assessments in agro-forestry systems and worked on the IFOAM research project. He organized a national conference on blue carbon ecosystems and established Parna Western Ghats FPC. Dr. Hegde received the UNDP Equator Prize 2021 for his work with Snehakunja Trust on freshwater swamps and blue carbon ecosystems.

- Dr. Harsha Hegde:

He is a co-founder and researcher at TREC. He works as a senior scientist at the Regional Medical Research Centre (ICMR) Belgaum. He has a PhD in plant sciences with a particular interest in traditional systems of medicine, especially herbal drugs. He also works on ecology and conservation of medicinal plants. He is the member of various committees; editor for several journals; recognized guide from various Universities; published scientific papers in journals of repute and guiding students for Ph.D. He is looking after the Research wing of TREC, where presently there are three elements:

1. Documentation of local plant resources and their socio-economic relations with the community therein.
2. Local traditional health practices (LTHPs) and their revitalisation.
3. Studies on selected medicinal plants to understand their ecological adaptations.

- Mr. Suhas Hegde:

Who is the founder and main key of TREC. After graduation, he is working with and for nature. He is an expert in Trekking, which is his field of interest. Photography and studying Reptiles and Amphibians are his passions. A herpetologist and well-known reptile specialist in the region trained him. He conducts various awareness campaigns about snakes and nature in schools, colleges, and villages. Spearheading an array of consciousness-raising initiatives, this crusader disseminates his knowledge across educational institutions and rural enclaves, fostering awareness about serpents and the natural realm. Concurrently, he is the custodian of TREC's nature education division, orchestrating its comprehensive management with unwavering dedication.

## RESEARCH PROJECT:

- Swamp Research

Through this program we conducted re-collection of data for the project that we conducted earlier on Myristica swamps of Uttara Kannada district. We have recorded the key data regarding regeneration capacity, and soil/water analysis at different seasons. Our data recorded more than 15 RET species belonging to families such as Myristicaceae, Anacardaceae, Myrtaceae, Dipterocarpaceae, Lauraceae and many more from 3 swamp sites of Uttara Kannada district and also analyzed their regeneration capacity.



## CONSERVATION ACTIVITY:

- Snake conservation program under 'Living with Snakes'

In North Canara, Karnataka, TREC has built a network of snake rescuers. This network works together to collect data on snake rescues every month. This data helps us understand snake populations and their habitats. TREC also provided training on snake rescue to Forest Department staff; to support safe handling and rehabilitation, TREC has distributed rescue kits to many snake rescuers.



## EDUCATION PROGRAM:

- Public awareness under 'Living with Snakes'

Through this program, we aim to transform public perception of snakes. We showcased their amazing adaptations and ecological roles, replacing fear with understanding, and paving the way for a future where humans and snakes share our planet peacefully. We raised public awareness through programs in schools, colleges, and villages by conducting interactive sessions, demonstrations and expert talks.



# CONTACT US



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# THANK YOU



*“Nature is the source of all true knowledge”*

-Leonardo Da Vinci