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To
The Editor,
Sir,

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I request that the following message may kindly be published in your esteemed daily:

TNAU promotes Trees Outside Forests

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Extends Grant

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, GOI and the USAID have jointly designed the Trees Outside Forests in India (TOFI) programme under a bilateral agreement on Sustainable Forestry and Climate Adaptation. The project is being implemented across seven different states of the country including Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh with a focus on expanding tree cover outside traditional forest areas, enhancing carbon sequestration and promoting tree-based livelihoods. It will feed into and help in achieving the national goal of 33% of area under forest or tree cover as per National Forest Policy, 1988 and support India's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) in the forestry sector.

Forest College and Research Institute, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Mettupalayam is a consortium partner in the project along with NCCF, ICAR-NIAP, CAFRI, TFRI, ATREE, GRAVIS coordinated by the lead partner CIFOR- ICRAF (Center for International Forestry Research – International Center for Research in Agroforestry). As a part of the project, two days stakeholders' consultation meeting and capacity building workshop is scheduled during 21st and 22nd June 2022 at Forest college and Research Institute, Mettupalayam. The programme was inaugurated on 21st June 2022 by Dr.V.Geethalakshmi, Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University. Dr. Chandarashekhar Biradar, Country Director-India & Chief of the Party – TOFI, CIFOR-ICRAF and other partners introduced the programme, Dr.R.Tamizh Vendan, Registrar, TNAU highlighted the importance of the project, Dr.M.Raveendran, Director of Research pressed the need for increasing the green cover in India in order to mitigate climate change through systematic Research and Development. Dr.E.Somasundaram, Director (ABD)

highlighted the role of the programme in development of Tree Based Enterprises (TBE). To further strengthen this programme, Century Plywood (I) limited signed an MoA with TNAU to promote further research in the Plywood sector in order to ensure assured raw material availability for the industries and guaranteed income for the farmers. Mr.Radhakrishna Rayabharam, CGM, State Bank of India, emphasised the role of institutional credit in order to promote tree cultivation among the farmers. A book entitled “Scale of Finance for Trees Outside Forests” with silviculture and economics of cultivation of 24 major agroforestry trees was released during the programme. The book will be of great utility to all stakeholders including farmers, financial institutions, tree insurers, industries, investors and other forest based business institutions.

The delegates inaugurated various new facilities created in the institute including veneer peeling machine, tissue culture laboratory, pulpwood based multifunctional agroforestry and establishing TOF forest at the campus. During the course of the workshop, other consortium partners of the project representing different states were exposed to various activities of the Consortium of Industrial Agroforestry (CIAF), Forest College and Research Institute, Mettupalayam and the Mettupalayam Agroforestry Business Incubation (MAFBIF). A series of presentations and discussion sessions are planned for two days along with the members of CIAF and MAFBIF Incubatees. The participants will be exposed to different model plantations and innovative agroforestry models and industries established by the CIAF members.

Public Relations Officer