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Forest restoration in the context of global climate goals: Community forestry institutions and prospects for more democratic forest governance

Presenter



Dr. Harry Fischer

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Physical presence : SIAS Meeting Hall
Virtual presence : <https://bit.ly/3HFLJER>
Date: 3rd February, 2023
Time: 1:45 PM to 3:15 PM

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Future Himalayan Research Seminar Series on Environment and Development is a research sharing platform to present recent and ongoing studies where researchers can meaningfully engage with each other and share knowledge. Not limiting itself to presentation and feedback loop, the seminar is also a platform for researcher to build social and intellectual relationship with contemporaries and experts from diverse array of research tradition within the overarching theme. Research seminar series is a bi-monthly event with open access to everyone interested. The seminar is planned for 1.5 hours, with first 45 minutes for presentation and the later half to engage with the audience for discussion and debate.

Seminar Overview

Countries around the world have committed to ambitious targets for forest restoration to sequester atmospheric carbon, preserve biodiversity, and support rural livelihoods. However, emerging research suggests that these commitments are often being pursued through large-scale tree planting programs, at times undermining community rights and compromising a wide range of ecosystem benefits that forests provide. This talk presents research examining the effects of 30+ years of tree planting in Himachal Pradesh India. Study finds no statistically significant improvement of forest canopy on average, while species composition has shifted away from biodiverse native forests to monoculture pine plantations. However, where communities have had long-term influence on planting processes and management, forest cover has increased and there is a far greater likelihood that local people derive livelihood benefits from planted trees. Building on this, the presenter presents emerging research that shows how community forestry institutions, civil society groups, and research/extension agents interact in ways that help to cultivate novel interventions that can better support of site-specific human and environmental objectives. The presenter argues that to achieve restoration goals, there is need to move away from more generalizable “best practice” principles to better understand the everyday politics of landscape interventions. Therefore, forest restoration as a creative act, fostered by dynamic and ongoing engagements within subnational democratic systems.



Dr. Harry Fischer is a Senior Lecturer and Associate Professor at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. His research looks at local democracy, forest restoration, and climate adaptation. He is a member of the advisory council of FOCALI, the Forest Climate Livelihoods Network of Sweden. He previously held positions at the Indian School of Business, Hyderabad, La Trobe University, and the University of

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