

Two-day workshop on Sustainable Farming Practices Past and Present, Bangalore, India, 21-22 February 2018.

The AHRC-funded Changing Farmers' Lives Past and Present research project held its first event in Bangalore, co-organised by the Open University and the Karnataka based NGO Green Foundation.

A variety of presentations by academic researchers and development practitioners explored the potential, first, of Arts and Humanities approaches, in particular aspects of oral history, stories, drama, and film, to document and support small farmer creativity in developing resilience to livelihood challenges in relation to food, biodiversity, and climate issues; and second, of participatory methods aimed at local community conservation of agricultural biodiversity and revival and control of indigenous seeds. Each session was followed by lively discussions.

A very original feature of the Workshop was a visit to the Janadhanya Women's Federation in nearby Terubeedi village. At the community seed bank centre, workshop participants met with local women farmers who presented their work on seed conservation and provided delicious tasters of some of the foods produced by the group, including millet-based papadoms and savoury snacks.

Programme

21 February

- 09.30-9.45: Sandip Pattanayak (Green Foundation) and Sandip Hazareesingh (Open University): Welcome and introduction to the workshop
- 09.50-10.10: Tsveti Bandakova and Sandip Hazareesingh (Open University): Documenting farming lives: the women's oral history project
- 10.30-10.50: Vanaja Ramparsad (Green Foundation): Threatened diversity, growing challenges: Approach of Green Foundation
- 11.05-11.25: Tea break
- 11.25-11.45: Sara Jones (Bath Spa University): What is participatory media and how can documentary film be useful?
- 12.05-12.25: Sanjay Patil (BAIF Development Research Foundation): Community-led conservation of agro-biodiversity and wild food resources for food security and livelihood
- 12.45-13.45: Lunch

- 13.45-14.05: Tom Wakeford (Coventry University): Embodying the agrarian crisis: farmers in Telengana making history through participatory theatre
- 14.25-14.45: Bishwadeep Ghose (Arghyam Foundation): Water and culture of water
- 15.05-15.25: Jasber Singh (Coventry University): Growing food as a form of resistance in Adivasi territories
- 15.40-16.00: Tea Break
- 16.00-16.20: David Hogg (Chief Agricultural Advisor, Naandi Foundation): Bio-dynamic farming and its future
- 16.40-17.00: Mike Wilson (Loughborough University): Storytelling as a way to access lay knowledge and unheard voices
- 17.20-17.40: GNS Reddy (AkshayaKalpa Organic Farm): Indigenous knowledge of women and its fundamental importance in conservation practices

22 February

- 09.30-11.45: Village visit: Janadhanya Women's Federation and seed bank
- 12.45-13.45: Lunch
- 13.45-14.05: Bablu Ganguly (Timbaktu Collective): Eco restoration
- 14.25-14.45: Heid Jerstad (Edinburgh University): Cold walls, erratic rains, and the duty of care: the social implications of changing weather in rural Himalayan India
- 15.05-15.25: Pramel Gupta (Vrutti Livelihood Resource Centre): Community-based approaches in agriculture
- 15.40-16.00: Tea break
- 16.00-16.20: Narayanan Raghunathan and Sandip Pattanayak (Green Foundation): Closing remarks
- 19.00-22.00: Conference dinner