

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE INDIAN SOCIETY FOR  
ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS (INSEE) FOR THE YEAR 2000-2001 SUBMITTED  
IN THE ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING HELD AT THE INDIAN  
INSTITUTE OF FOREST MANAGEMENT BHOPAL ON 20 DECEMBER 2001**

**Annual Report of the Activities of the Indian Society for Ecological Economics (INSEE)  
for the year 2000-2001 submitted in the Annual General Body Meeting held at the  
Indian Institute of Forest Management Bhopal on 20 December 2001.**

This report covers the major developments of activities of the Society for the period since April 2000 till date. In the last Annual General Meeting of the Society held on 23 March 2001 most of the activities of the 2000-01 were reported by the Secretary in his report. However, we may recapitulate them here, which may be followed by the reporting of the important developments of the current year (2001-02) for information and consideration by the General Body in the context of future development of the Society.

**Election and Constitution of Executive Committee**

1. The process of the First election of the President and of the members of the Executive Committee (EC) of the Society was completed on 10 June 2000. The constitution of the new full EC (including the co-opted members) along with the election of the office bearers from within the EC members was concluded in the first meeting of the EC held on 28 July 2000 at the India International Centre, New Delhi. The composition of the new EC had already been communicated to all the members of INSEE and recorded in the last annual report of the Society which was submitted in the meeting of the AGM on 23 March 2001. The Society again records its thanks to Prof. Sudarshan Iyengar for conducting the first election of the EC of the Society. The EC started functioning since the end of July 2000. The EC also nominated Dr. Pushpam Kumar as Faculty-in-Charge of the INSEE at the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi and as permanent special invitee in the EC meetings.

**Round Table, Workshop and Training Programme on Methodological Issues in Ecological Economics**

2. In the year 2000-01 the Society first planned to organise an interdisciplinary workshop on the methodological issues in the multidisciplinary approach of research in the emerging area of ecological economics. While the main workshop could not be held by March 2001 for various logistical reasons, a half day Round Table of discussions was organised on 23 March 2001 as a prelude to the main event which could take place finally on 22-24 July 2001. This Round Table was conducted by Prof. Gopal Kadekodi and the main speakers included Prof. M. K. Pandit, Prof. C. R. Babu, Dr. S. Lele and Prof. Ramprasad Sengupta among others. The Round Table discussion threw up certain issues for being followed up in the subsequent main workshop.
3. The INSEE workshop on Methodological Issues in Interdisciplinary Research on the Environment was finally conducted as a 3-day Workshop and hosted by the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Environment and Development (CSIED) in the Campus of the Institute for Social and Economic Change Bangalore during 22-24 July 2001. The objectives of the workshop was to discuss the following:
  - (a) the types of interdisciplinary crossings that are needed for successfully addressing environmental issues in research, teaching and policy advocacy on the resources and the environment
  - (b) the philosophical, cultural, institutional and practical constraints in such activities involving interdisciplinarity and means for overcoming these constraints to facilitate multidisciplinary approach in research, education and policy decisions on the environment.

The workshop was organised and co-ordinated by Dr. S. Lele, Prof. Bina Agarwal and Prof. Gopal Kadekodi. It was attended by 20 primary participants and several eminent scholars from different disciplines including Economics, Sociology, Anthropology, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Ecology, Environmental Science, Climatology, Geography, Forestry and other Technology studies. Prof. Sheila Jasanoff of Harvard University delivered the keynote address in the inaugural session. The eminent scholars who spoke in the workshop or chaired in the plenary sessions included Prof. Charles Perrings (University of York), Prof. Juan Martinez-Alier (University of Barcelona), Prof. Dilip Ahuja (NIAS, Bangalore), Prof. Anand Patwardhan (IIT Mumbai), Prof. P. S. Ramakrishnan (JNU, New Delhi), Dr. Ramchandra Guha (Bangalore), Prof. Kailash Mahapatra (ISI Calcutta), Prof. Kaushik Basu (Cornell University) and Prof. Jyoti Parikh (IGDR, Mumbai).

The discussions in the workshop were considered to be very useful and sensitising for the participants as indicated by their feedback. A large number of ideas and suggestions emerged from the deliberations which included, among others (a) compilation of a reader of interdisciplinary research on the environment for INSEE members, (b) holding a one day training workshop on "Basic Hydrology for Social scientists" preceding the Second Biennial Conference on Water and (c) broadening INSEE's membership base by reaching out to ecologists, environmental scientists and non economics social scientists in India who are working on interdisciplinary issues. The workshop also suggested institutional changes required to be brought into the functioning of UGC, MOEF, ICSSR and Planning Commission so that their respective designs of activities concerning curriculum for degree programmes, environmental management capacity building, sponsorship of research projects or faculty recruitment and project appraisal for investment policy decisions etc. could effectively incorporate the basic elements of the interdisciplinarity in research, teaching and policies on the environment. The full proceedings of the workshop are in the process of being compiled and edited by the three co-ordinators of the workshop and will be made available in the public domain. We thank Dr. S. Lele, Prof. Gopal Kadekodi and Prof. Bina Agarwal for making the workshop a success.

4 It may be noted here that we have already implemented one of the suggestions of the workshop with reference to the holding a workshop cum training programme on hydrology for social scientists, and have organised it as a one-day preconference event on 18 December 2001 at IIFM Bhopal. This programme was attended by more than 20 participants and addressed by more than 3 eminent experts who joined it as resource persons. We thank Dr. S. Lele and Dr. Madhu Verma for organising this training programme-cum-workshop.

### **Organisation of the Second Biennial Conference**

- 5 Besides, the planning for the methodology workshop, the EC initiated the work of planning and organisation of the currently ongoing Second Biennial Conference of the Society in 2001-02. The EC chose its theme to be "Water Resources, Sustainable Livelihoods and Ecosystem Services" along with various subthemes. It decided its venue and timing to be Indian Institute of Forest Management Bhopal on 19-21 December 2001 (for 2 ½ days). A call for papers for the conference was announced through advertisement over a range of subthemes like hydrological aspects of long term supply of water, ecological services of water, water pollution, technology for water, institutions for water management, demand management for water including problems of conflict resolution, economic evaluation of water, water as input for sustainable development etc.
- 6 Subsequently, in the current year 2001-02 the Society received encouraging response to the call for papers over the above range of topics on water which are of crucial importance for the sustainability of the development process in India. About 40

contributed papers have been admitted for the technical sessions of the Conference. Besides, the structure of the Conference has been planned to provide for plenary sessions for invited speakers and round tables to take up methodological and policy issues relating to water. The EC and the Programme Committee of the Conference identified about 30 Resource persons of which 16 were to speak in various plenary sessions and the others (about 14) to chair various sessions of the Conference. We are very thankful to Prof. John Proops, President Elect of the International Society for Ecological Economics for joining us in the Conference and giving us encouragement and support.

- 7 The EC has set up an Organising Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. Ram Prasad, Director, IIFM, Bhopal with Dr. Madhu Verma, Associate Professor, IIFM as its Organising Secretary to organise all local matters relating to the holding of the Conference at IIFM, Bhopal. We are very grateful to the Director IIFM, Dr. Madhu Verma and other Faculty members in the Committee for their excellent co-operations in this respect.
- 8 The current ongoing Second Biennial Conference on Water is being attended by more than 100 participants/resource persons including some research students. We plan to publish the proceedings of this Conference for wider dissemination of the emerging ideas and the results of policy research in water resources and follow up by further organisation of workshop/round tables for their wider applications in real life decision making.

#### **Financial Situation**

- 9 The normal day-to-day activities of the Society such as holding of EC meeting / General Body meeting and organisation of round tables/ workshops, etc are being financed out by the initial grant of the Ministry of Finance for an amount of Rs. 12 lakhs in April 2001. The Round tables of March 2001, the Methodology workshop of July 2001 and the Preconference workshop-cum-training on Hydrology for social scientists in this month are financed out of this grant.

Shri V. B. Eswaran, Treasurer, will present the Audited Accounts of the year 2000-01 and details of the current financial position and prospect of the Society. I would like to point out that the Second Biennial Conference which has a budget of almost Rs. 16 lakhs is being largely financed by grants from Winrock India and Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) for respective amounts of Rs. 2.5 lakhs and Rs. 13.5 lakhs approximately. It may be further mentioned that INSEE has obtained FCRA registration with the support of the Ministry of Finance.

- 10 As now the activities of INSEE are picking up the balance of the Finance Ministry grant, on the other hand, would soon be expected to come down to a low enough level to be considered adequate for sustaining the activities of the INSEE. The Society therefore applied for the sanction and the release of a second grant of Rs 12 lakhs. In response to this application a Visiting Committee of the Department of Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Finance headed by Dr. Tarun Das, Economic Adviser visited the INSEE Office at IEG, Delhi on 8 September 2001, met the Secretary, the Treasurer and the Faculty-in-Charge of INSEE and discussed future problems and prospects relating to financial matters of INSEE in details. While the Committee appreciated the need for financial support in the initial phase of formation and consolidation of the Society, it pointed out in the course of discussion the importance of INSEE taking steps for long run financial sustainability of INSEE. In the meanwhile we are in touch with the Finance Ministry for a second grant.

## Membership and Database

11 Our membership of the Society stood at 177 as on 18 October, 2001, with the break up: Life Members 99, Ordinary Members 65, Institutional member 4 and student member 9. We need to broaden the base of our membership both in terms of numbers and diversity of disciplinary background. We should be pro-active to reach out to the scholars and researchers in other disciplines as recommended by the INSEE Methodological workshop of July 2001 at ISEC Bangalore. The other suggestion of the workshop in respect of compiling a reader of interdisciplinary research on the environment is also very important. The EC of the Society also had felt in an earlier meeting the need of developing a database of resource persons, titles and abstracts of their research work in the different disciplines of natural and social sciences which have relevance in the context of interdisciplinarity of ecological economics. We have not as yet been able to translate these ideas into plans and actions. The Society needs to develop mechanisms which can make such ideas of development of information base very much operational as a project or structured activity. I would appeal to wider active participation of the members of INSEE in this regard.

12 I end here by thanking the members of General Body, the EC and Dr. Pushpam Kumar, Faculty-in-charge of INSEE, and the staff of the IEG, Delhi for their co-operation in the activities of the Society.



Ramprasad Sengupta  
Secretary, INSEE