

THE INDIAN SOCIETY FOR ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS (INSEE)

ANNUAL REPORT

2015-2016

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1. Introduction

During the year 2015-16, the Indian Society for Ecological Economics (INSEE) organized a number of activities in line with its mission of furthering dialogues on and building capacity for research at the interface of economy, ecology and society. This report summarises the activities in brief. Detailed reports of individual activities have already been circulated amongst members and are available on the INSEE website (www.ecoinsee.org).

2. Events Organized

- A Capacity Building Workshop on “Ecology, Society and Development in North East India: Concepts and Methods” was organized jointly by INSEE with RGU at Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh during September 21-24, 2015, held at Department of Economics, Rajiv Gandhi University, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh. The workshop brought together 19 participants and five resource persons/faculty engaged in different fields around the nature-society-economy complex, and followed an intense and rigorous engagement with inter-disciplinary research methodology used by the participants in their research in the region. All concept notes presented by the participants were reviewed by experts, and then were presented and discussed in the workshop. SeemaPurushothaman and Kalyan Das were the key organizers from INSEE. The report is available on the INSEE website. (http://ecoinsee.org/lib_docs/Rpt_Cap_Building_Workshop_Sept_21-24_2015.pdf)



Brototi Roy receiving the NISTADS-INSEE awards from Joan Martinez-Alier

➤ The winners of the NISTADS-INSEE awards for the best popular writing on the ‘Growth, green growth, degrowth’ Symposium, organized in Sept 2014, were identified in June 2015 by a jury consisting of Prof. Kanchan Chopra, Dr. Nandan Nawn, Dr. Julien-Francois Gerber and Dr. Rajeswari Raina. The winners were two students, Brototi Roy and Shobhna Jha (both from TERI University), who would receive awards of Rs.5,000 each. The payments were made by the Director, NISTADS in August 2015. The certificates to the awardees were presented at the Valedictory session of the 8th Biennial Conference in January 2016.

➤ **8th Biennial Conference on “Urbanisation and the Environment”**

The highlight of the year was the 8th Biennial Conference of the Indian Society for Ecological Economics (INSEE) held in Bengaluru on 4th-6th January 2016 on the theme of “**Urbanization and the Environment**”. The Conference was hosted by the Department of Management Studies, Indian Institute of Science, along with Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment and National Institute of Advanced Studies. It was held at the Satish Dhawan Auditorium on the IISc campus.



Participants at the INSEE 8th Biennial Conference

The main aim of this 8th Biennial Conference of INSEE was to explore how environmentally and socially sustainable urbanization is possible in India. With this overarching aim, the Conference objectives were two-fold:

- (i) to generate inter-disciplinary knowledge on the various aspects of urban production, distribution and consumption, and

(ii) to enable a well-informed academic and policy debate on the relationships between urbanisation and the environment in India.

The Conference had 185 participants, including 102 authors and co-authors, 45 registered student participants, and 23 volunteers. Delegates came not only from many parts of India, but also from 12 other countries (Bangladesh, Canada, Chile, China, Nepal, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States).

There were 4 Plenary Keynote Talks and 82 technical papers presented in 5 parallel sessions. In addition, 6 Plenary Round Table Discussions (RTDs) were held, which brought 27 national and international experts (which included academics, policymakers and activists) to debate key issues like sustainable South Asian cities, inter-disciplinarity in environmental research, challenges of urban waste management urban water management, climate resilient cities, and the media.

The Presidential Address was given by Dr. Sharachandra Lele wherein he reviewed the evolution of research at the interface of ecology-economy-society in India from the perspective of urban environments, and set the stage for INSEE's future directions. Ms. Sunita Narain delivered the Inaugural Keynote Address, emphasizing that there will be no sustainable urbanization if there is no equitable and fair urbanization.



The Keynote Talk by Prof. Barbara Harriss-White focused on the informal waste economies that are central to urban production, distribution, consumption and reproduction. The Keynote Talk by Dr. Sharat Guttikunda focused on the conceptualization and measurement of urban air pollution, and its implication for regulation. The Valedictory Address by Prof. Joan Martinez-Alier focused on urban metabolism, conflicts and environmental justice in rapidly urbanising India. Overall the conference consisted of high quality academic and policy-oriented presentation and debates around the challenges in urbanization and the environment. For the full conference report, see http://ecoinsee.org/lib_docs/conference-2016/INSEE_Conf_2016_Report.pdf

3. Website of INSEE

A new version of the INSEE website was formally launched at the Annual General Meeting of INSEE held during the 8th Biennial Conference in January 2016 in Bangalore. This included a completely revamped look, special pages for the 8th Biennial Conference, facility for online registration of new members and online payment of membership fee, and online registration of Conference participants. Efforts put in by the Website Task Force, which consisted of Bibhu Prasad Nayak (Chair), Ram Mohan Turaga, Chandra Sekhar Bahinipati and Soumyajit Bhar (student member), along with Smita Manohar (LBWOnline), were greatly appreciated by the members.

4. Publication of previous conference proceedings

- 6th Conference volume- The edited volume emerging out of the 6th Conference (Hyderabad 2011) was published by Springer in October 2015. A panel discussion was organized around the book at ORF Kolkata in October 2015 using the editor/author copies. Copies of the book have been sent to the members.
- 7th Biennial Conference Volume: All the papers have been received. Final manuscript and publication would be completed in 2016.

5. Membership of the INSEE

As on March 31, 2016, INSEE has 438 Life members, 10 Life Members Corporate Bodies, 4 ordinary members and 10 student members. The total membership thus stands at 462.

During the Annual General Meeting held in January 2016, the membership fee of the INSEE was revised. The new fees are as given below::

- (i) Ordinary (Annual) membership: Rs.500/- (reduced from Rs.1,000)
- (ii) Life Membership: Rs.5,000/- (increased from Rs.4,000)
- (iii) Student Membership: Rs. 500/- for a period of 5 years (subject to student status) (converted from Rs.100 per annum to reduce transaction costs)
- (iv) Institutional membership (non-profit institutions): Rs.20,000/- (increased from Rs.15,000)
- (v) Corporate membership (other than non-profit institutions): Rs.30,000/- (increased from Rs.15,000)