

Project Update: May 2018

1. Introduction

The Rufford Foundation supported project has organized half-day awareness creation conference to celebrate International Biological Diversity Conservation Day with the theme "Roles of Local Actions for Global Biodiversity Conservation Successes in collaboration with Jimma University College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine Nature club. In order to deliver the awareness creation programme successful different teams coordination, facilitation, logistic, and entertainments were organised ahead of the programme. The awareness creation programme delivered through performing music, paper presentation, experience sharing, and presenting poem with invited experts from different organisations. Program participants were gathered from the Department of Natural Resource Management, plant science and horticulture, animal science, agricultural economics, agricultural extension, rural development, veterinary medicine, and post-harvest management students.



Refreshment and facilitating team

The refreshment team distributing bottled water for International Biological Diversity Conservation Day awareness creation programme participants at the entrance of conference room located at Jimma University College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (**Photo 1**). Program facilitator has played important role in introducing program contents, sequences and facilitating the overall stage activities of the day being on (**Photo 1.1**).



Photo 1: Refreshment teams distributing bottled water at gate of the conference room.
Photo 1.1: Program facilitator introducing the program content

Opening speech

Dr. Fikadu Mitiku Dean of the college of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine, Jimma University launch the programme with opening speech (**Photo 2**). In his speech, he has mentioned biodiversity is everything for us and our overall social and economic wellbeing is determined with biodiversity. Because, it is the sources of everything we have been using in our daily life. We have to conserve the biodiversity and the place where they found trough sharing our knowledge and experiences to others, and directly participating in conservation practices. Today we are gathered in this hall to celebrate the International Biodiversity Conservation, as student you came from different parts of the country (Ethiopia) to attend your education in this college and after graduation you will go back to the community and involve professional works (**Photo 3**). When you go back to the larger community, you have to do your part in addressing challenges of biodiversity conservation regardless of your field of study. The initial step of biodiversity conservation work is proper understanding of biodiversity and its conservation needs. That is why this programme was organised today. Finally, he has concluded his message by acknowledging the Rufford Foundation for organising such an interesting programme for the students in the college.



Photo 2: The dean delivering an open speech on International Biological Diversity Conservation awareness creation festival at Jimma University College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine. **Photo 3:** Partial view of the International Biodiversity Conservation Day participants

2. Awareness creation activities

2.1. Music and poem by Nature club of college

Nature conservation club of Jimma University College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine performed music and dances on nature conservation related issues. The music was presented in local language "Afan Oromo" and participants were enjoyed the music message (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVmznWDAwXE&feature=youtu.be>). It is well known that, music created an ideal environment for people to learn through voice, dancing and expression. Thus, the performed music was the motivated some participates and they demonstrated their feeling to protect nature by provided cash gift to the club for future works.



Photo 4: Nature club students performing music and dance to the participants. **Photo 5:** A student Lili Sekato presenting her poem on the importance of biodiversity

Beside the music and dance, a student from the Department of Animal Science has presented poem to the participant on the roles of biodiversity in our daily life (**Photo 5**). It is known fact that, positive poetry is able to construct and inspire generations, and makes people to perform good things like loving, humanity, and do what the love. In addition, poet speaks to the reader intimately and exclusively giving you an insight into the inner workings of their minds, ideas, and loves. Accordingly, some participants informed us they were inspired and positively influenced with the presented poem. This indicates using variety of awareness creation methods helps us to reach our target groups in simple and ways.

Presentation 1: Scientific paper presentation on three different topics (by A Abebayehu).

Basic concepts of biodiversity and conservation concerns Abebayehu delivered presentation and explain the basic concepts of biodiversity, importance and conservation concerns in simple worlds - understandable to all participants (**Photo 6**). The presenter explained global biodiversity conservation challenges with reference to local conditions and comparing past events (e.g. species extinction) with current phenomenon. At end of the programme, some participated are interviewed about the programme, they told that presentation on concepts of biodiversity and conservation

concerns has helped them to understand biodiversity and conservation needs. Some of the respondents mentioned, before the programme they consider biodiversity just only as collection of big wild animals live in wild and used for tourist attraction. However, this presentation has helped them to understand the basic concept of biodiversity and conservation needs. For more information on the presentation please read the uploaded document with this file named as "1 paper presentation by Abebayehu A".



Photo 5: Abebayehu, presenting paper on concepts of biodiversity and its conservation concerns. **Photo 6:** Partial view of participants.



Photo 7: Partial view of participants

Presentation 2: Biodiversity conservation status of Ethiopia (By Mr. A Dherassa from Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute)

The presentation delivered under this topic addressed the status of plant and animal diversity of conservation efforts in Ethiopia, success histories and the way forward (Photo 9). It informed the participants much about biodiversity conservation efforts at local level-Ethiopia. Most of the awareness creation conference participants witnessed, previously they were limited information about biodiversity conservation efforts in Ethiopia, but this presentation helped them to know about their country's biodiversity status, conservation success, and challenges. Some students told that they are inspired to work in biodiversity conservation sectors. For more information on this presentation please read the uploaded PowerPoint document with file name of "2 paper presentation by Dhressa A".



Photo 9: Invited guest from Ethiopia Biodiversity Institute presenting paper

Presentation 3: Concepts of Biodiversity Conservation (Prof. Debela H. from Jimma University)

The professor started his talks with giving live examples about biodiversity through selecting a few participants and asking them about what they eat and drank during breakfast, lunch, dinner and if any medical treatments taken (Photo 10). The participants mentioned many things and the professor has summarised that what you have mentioned are derived from biodiversity. For this reason, currently biodiversity is threatened and depleted. Biodiversity is essential for our survival! Our wellbeing is granted without the biodiversity and health ecosystems, so conserve it and watch it. During the presentation, all of the participants were actively attending the session and gained life experience from the professor. Finally, the professor kindly requested the participants to play their roles in conservation works to save species and their habitats. Some of the interviewed participants stated that before the awareness creation presentations and

experience-sharing program, they feel conservation action is the works of biologists and natural resource management experts. However, this programme has shifted their understanding of biodiversity conservation, and they perceive biodiversity conservation is shared responsibility of entire society. For more information please read the PowerPoint presentation document uploaded with this document named as "3 paper presentation by Prof. Debela H".



Photo 8: Prof. Debela presents paper and sharing his experience for the participants

3. Closing remark: (by Abebayehu A.)

Dear participants of the 25th International Biodiversity Conservation Day organised by the Rufford Foundation grant support at Jimma University College of Agriculture and veterinary Medicine as we have learned from paper presentations and gained experience from biodiversity experts, biodiversity is part of our environment and associated with our daily life activities. In the absence of biodiversity, our survival on this planet is questionable do your part to conserve species and their habitats. We can contribute for the survival of ever life on earth by taking responsible decisions and actions "action that enhance biodiversity conservation" in our daily life. Lastly, I kindly ask all of you to be an ambassador for nature conservation via awaking and teaching your friends, parents, and neighbors about biodiversity conservation.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank The Rufford Foundation for their financial support. In addition, I extend my thanks to Jimma University College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine for allowing us to conduct this programme in their beautiful hail, and Jimma University College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine Nature conservation club, student council and other club members for their active roles in this programme.