



UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON
**ECOSYSTEM
RESTORATION**
2021-2030



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
**RANGELANDS AND
PASTORALISTS**
2026

PROJECT KICK-START AND METHODOLOGY WORKSHOP

on

**Rehabilitating Alpine Grasslands of the Western Himalaya
(Connecting Science, Policy, and Communities)**

27–29 July 2026

Sponsored by
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), GoI

Under
National Mission on Himalayan Studies (NMHS)

Organized by
**Centre for Biodiversity & Taxonomy
Department of Botany, University of Kashmir, Srinagar**

In Collaboration with



G.B. Pant National Institute
of Himalayan Environment,
Almora, Uttarakhand



CSIR-Institute of Himalayan
Bioresource Technology,
Palampur, HP



University of Ladakh,
Ladakh



HNB Garhwal University,
Uttarakhand

Venue:

**Gandhi Bhawan
University of Kashmir, Hazratbal,
Srinagar – 190006, J&K, India**



ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

Grasslands are among the world's most extensive and ecologically important terrestrial ecosystems, supporting rich biodiversity, sustaining pastoral livelihoods, regulating hydrological processes, storing substantial stocks of belowground carbon, and providing a wide range of ecosystem services. Across the Western Himalaya, alpine grasslands are increasingly threatened by climate change and unsustainable human activities, including overgrazing, unregulated tourism, expansion of infrastructure, and overexploitation of natural resources. These pressures have resulted in habitat degradation, biodiversity loss, declining soil health, reduced ecosystem functioning, and diminished ecological resilience, underscoring the urgent need for evidence-based conservation and restoration interventions.

Recognizing the global urgency of reversing ecosystem degradation, the United Nations declared 2021–2030 as the “**Decade on Ecosystem Restoration**” calling for coordinated international efforts to protect, restore, and sustainably manage degraded ecosystems. Complementing this global initiative, the United Nations has also declared 2026 as the “**International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP)**” highlighting the critical importance of rangelands (i.e., grasslands/pasturelands) in conserving biodiversity, sustaining pastoral livelihoods, strengthening food security, and enhancing climate resilience. The observance further emphasizes the need to advance scientific research and strengthen collaboration among researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and local communities.

It is in this context that, as part of the MoEFCC, Government of India-sponsored project under the NMHS Scheme entitled “*Rehabilitation of Degraded Alpine Grasslands using Ecosystem-based Solutions for Sustaining Ecosystem Services and Ecological Resilience across the Western Himalaya*”, the Centre for Biodiversity & Taxonomy, Department of Botany, University of Kashmir, as the project lead institution along with the collaborating partners is organizing a three-day **Project Kick-start and Methodology Workshop**. The workshop, scheduled from **27–29 July 2026**, aims to bring together scientists, restoration practitioners, policymakers, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and local communities to exchange knowledge, foster interdisciplinary collaborations, and develop science-based strategies for the sustainable management of alpine grasslands across the Western Himalaya, India.

KEY THEMES

- Alpine grassland ecology
- Grassland ecosystem services
- Drivers of alpine grassland degradation
- Climate change & ecosystem resilience
- Grassland soil health
- Grassland biodiversity conservation
- Ecosystem-based restoration
- Community participation

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Keynote addresses
- Expert lectures
- Technical sessions
- Panel discussions
- Stakeholder consultation
- Restoration demonstrations
- Collaborative planning
- Networking opportunities
- Science policy-society interface

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Enhanced scientific understanding
- Collaborative research network
- Restoration roadmap
- Research prioritization
- Restoration protocol development
- Capacity building
- Science-policy integration
- Sustainable grassland management

HANDS-ON FIELD VISIT

Participants will have the opportunity to visit an alpine grassland restoration site to gain first-hand experience of ecosystem rehabilitation in the field. The visit will include:

- Demonstration of project protocols and field methodologies
- Restoration site assessment and monitoring techniques
- Vegetation and soil sampling methods
- Microclimate monitoring using field sensors
- Restoration interventions and best management practices
- Interactive discussions with project scientists and field experts



ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Established in 1948, the University of Kashmir is one of India's premier institutions of higher learning, located at Hazratbal on the banks of the world-renowned Dal Lake, Srinagar. The University is recognized for its excellence in teaching, research, innovation, and public outreach. Spread across multiple campuses in the Kashmir Valley, it offers a vibrant academic environment with a strong commitment to interdisciplinary research and sustainable development. In recognition of its academic excellence, the University was re-accredited with the prestigious A++ Grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council in 2025, which reflects the University's sustained commitment to excellence in teaching, research, innovation, and academic quality.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

This workshop is intended for:

- Scientists & researchers
- Faculty members
- Research scholars
- Forest & Wildlife officials
- Government agencies
- Restoration practitioners
- Conservation NGOs
- Environmental managers
- Policymakers
- Local community representatives

PARTICIPATION IS BY INVITATION ONLY



ABOUT THE CENTRE FOR BIODIVERSITY & TAXONOMY

The Centre for Biodiversity & Taxonomy (CBT), formerly known as the Centre of Plant Taxonomy, is a premier research centre of the Department of Botany, University of Kashmir, dedicated to the documentation, conservation, and sustainable management of Himalayan plant diversity. Since its establishment in 1981, the Centre has conducted extensive botanical explorations across the Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh Himalaya, generating internationally recognized research through high-impact publications, books, and scientific collaborations. The Centre houses the internationally recognized KASH Herbarium, an invaluable repository of Himalayan plant diversity that supports research, teaching, and species identification. With strong national and international collaborations and substantial externally funded research projects, the Centre continues to play a leading role in biodiversity research, taxonomy, conservation, ecological restoration, and capacity building in the Himalayan region.



CHIEF PATRON

Prof. Nilofer Khan
Vice Chancellor
University of Kashmir

PATRONS

Prof. Saket Kushwaha
Vice Chancellor
University of Ladakh

Dr. Sudesh Kumar Yadav
Director
CSIR - Institute of Himalayan
Bioresource Technology

Dr. I. D. Bhatt
Director
G.B. Pant National Institute of
Himalayan Environment

Prof. Shri Prakash Singh
Vice Chancellor
HNB Garhwal University

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Vice Chancellor, Amity University Punjab, Mohali

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University of Kashmir, Srinagar

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ISRO, National Remote Sensing Centre, Hyderabad

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ISRO, Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad

Dr. Sumanta Bagchi
Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru

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Prof. Abdul Hamid Wani

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Prof. Mohd Yaqub Bhat

Dr. Latif A. Peer

Dr. Riffat John

Dr. Irfan Rashid

Dr. Mohd Arief Zargar

ORGANIZING SECRETARY

Prof. Anzar A. Khuroo
CBT, Department of Botany, University of Kashmir,
Srinagar

CO-ORGANIZING SECRETARIES (OUTSTATION)

Prof. Feroz Din Sheikh
University of Ladakh, Leh

Dr. Amit Chawla
CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology,
Palampur, Himachal Pradesh

Dr. K. S. Kanwal
G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan
Environment, Kosi-Katarmal,
Almora, Uttarakhand

Dr. Vijaylaxmi
High Altitude Plant Physiology Research Centre,
HNB Garhwal University, Srinagar, Uttarakhand

WORKSHOP COORDINATION TEAM

Dr. Aijaz Hassan Ganie

Mr. Akhtar H. Malik

Dr. Imtiyaz Ahmad Hurrah

Dr. Faizan Shafee

Dr. Firdous Ahmad Dar

Dr. Shabir Ahmad Zargar

Dr. Bilal Ahmad Rasray

Mr. Irfan Ahmad Lone

Mr. Bilal A. Mir

CONTACT INFORMATION

Prof. Anzar A. Khuroo
(Organizing Secretary): +91 9622666606
anzarak@uok.edu.in

Dr. Maroof Hamid
(Workshop Coordinator): +91 7006003047
hamidmaroofmudasir@gmail.com

