

Local learning center

The Nilgiris
Tamilnadu, India

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Southern India



Nilgiris (Blue Mountain)

Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve



- Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve: declared under the Man & Biosphere prog of UNESCO
- A mega diversity hotspot
- Covering parts of Tamil Nadu, Kerala & Karnataka
- Indigenous population of around 2,00,000
- Over 30 indigenous groups
- Large population of endemic species in plants, animals and birds



Source of water



About Nilgiris, Tamilnadu

- The Nilgiri Hills are an ancient grassland plateau 11° north of the equator in South West India and rising in steep cliffs (ghats) from 800 to 3000 metres above the plains of the south.
- In the hollows of the hills, tropical evergreen forests have reached up from the plains and adapted to become temperate evergreen forests (shola forests)

- **It is a unique biosphere, with many endemic species, designated as one of the world Biosphere Reserves for conservation.**
- **Previously this grassland acted as a massive reservoir for water which was released steadily by the roots of the shola trees. It is one of the main sources of water for South India.**

LAND USE PATTERN

- Total geographical area 2,54,485 hectares
- Forest 1,42,577 ha (56 %)
- Net cultivable area 79,514 ha (30 %)
- Area used for other purpose 32,394 ha(14 %)

Over the past 40 years, 60% of the grassland has been lost-

- By 100s of acres of exotic wattle & eucalyptus plantations drying up many perennial springs
- By extensive tea estates set up to support thousands of Sri Lankan refugees
- By encroachments by incomers in unplanned urban areas

- By agriculture based on industrial and chemical concepts which has poisoned the water & land and developed exploitative and desperate farming attitudes in a culture where traditional, sustainable systems had previously existed.
- By Hydro electric dam complexes which are increasingly silted up by top soil degradation

- Migration of youth to the nearest cities for a better ? jobs rather than agriculture
- By extensive encroachments of monoculture vegetable cultivation
- Soil erosion due unorganized felling of trees

Learning center in The Nilgiris

About the Proposed Learning Centre:

- Proposed location Coonoor, The Nilgiris, Tamilnadu
- Elevation 1950 meters MSL, Temperature varies between 7-27 deg C.
- Area: 4 acres surrounded with 126 acres of certified organic tea plantation.
- The farm is located on the main road of Coonoor to Kotagiri. Just 5 kms from Coonoor town.

Target group

- NGO from Nilgiri's biosphere
- Small farmers' group
- Tea plantations
- Tribal people
- Government Dept officials
- Individuals and women farmers









farmer to farmer Interaction & learning



Diversified crops

- Area of Nilgiris
- Cultivation area
- Tea area
- Vegetables area
- Black pepper, ginger, coffee and spices area

Proposed farm for a learning center





Marketing

- High demand for so called 'English vegetables' or 'Exotic vegetables' spices
- Spices, Coffee, Ginger etc
- Chennai, Coimbatore, Bangalore and cities in Kerala.
- Through farmers market, direct supply to exclusive shops
- Individuals customers from the nearest town





Eco-friendly shop



Thank you