



## Call for application for participation in a 5-day field-based workshop at Indian Sundarbans

(Travel and accommodation expenses to be funded by the **Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Govt. of India** under **Newton Bhabha Researcher Links** programme along with the **Newton-Bhabha Fund** and the delivery partner **British Council**)



On **“Building Ecological Resilience in Vulnerable Mangroves of the Indian Sundarbans: Sustainable and Equitable Management of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in the era of Climate Change”**

**Start date: 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 2022**

**End date: 6<sup>th</sup> January, 2022**

**West Bengal State University, India** and **Newcastle University, UK**, are organizing a **field-based workshop** on the theme **“Building Ecological Resilience in Vulnerable Mangroves of the Indian Sundarbans: Sustainable and Equitable Management of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in the era of Climate Change”** from **2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> January, 2022**. This workshop is supported by the **Newton Bhabha Fund** and co-funded by the **Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Govt. of India**, and delivered by the **British Council**, and will have contributions from leading researchers from esteemed institutions from **India and UK**. This **Newton-Bhabha Researcher Links Workshop** provides opportunities for **early career researchers from India and UK** to interact, learn from each other and explore opportunities for building future research collaborations.

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As part of this programme our **UK partner, Newcastle University** already has conducted a physical workshop (**29-30<sup>th</sup> November, 2021**) with **Early Career Researchers (ECR)** from **UK only**, led by the **UK lead, Dr Marion Pfeifer, Reader (Associate Professor) in Landscape Ecology and Management, Newcastle University.**

As a parallel to the above workshop, now in India, **West Bengal State University** is organizing a **5-day field-based workshop at Indian Sundarbans** led by the **Indian lead, Dr Krishna Ray, Assistant Professor, Department of Botany, West Bengal State University, Kolkata-700126.**

This workshop will be followed by a **virtual conference in the second week of January, 2022 with all UK and Indian participants** of the workshop to enable knowledge exchange, finalise key outcomes, and outline ways forward working across both countries.

**Our objectives for this workshop include:**

- (1)** Discuss theory behind, and identify Nature-based Solutions for restoring/enhancing eco-resilience of the Indian Sundarbans to climate change and weather extremes with co-benefits for biodiversity conservation
- (2)** Define social and ecological targets for conservation and management interventions aimed at restoring resilience of the Sundarbans.
- (3)** Identify data and knowledge gaps in the system that need filling to manage key threats and monitor progress towards intervention targets.
- (4)** Co-develop a conceptual understanding of the system pathways that underlie human decision-making on mangrove use and management.

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As part of this programme, we are now inviting Early Career Researchers (ECRs) from India to apply to participate in the above-mentioned workshop.

The application form, with participants' details duly filled should be submitted before the deadline of **25<sup>th</sup> December, 2021** (Our sincere apologies and inabilities for giving such a tight time constraint, but you always can write email to us, if you face any problem).

We are looking to invite **up to 15 Early Career Researchers** from a wide range of disciplines (geography, environmental sciences, social science, anthropology, remote sensing, oceanography, coastal management, botany, zoology, biochemistry, ecology, landscape or restoration ecology, applied/environmental microbiology, data analyses or any other field, which is relevant to the theme and objectives of the workshop).

#### **Expected outcomes for this workshop include:**

- Conceptualisation of the systems approach framework.
- Data gap/knowledge gaps (social, ecological, political, biophysical, policy needs?) needed to parameterise the framework identified and a plan for filling gaps developed
- Modelling approaches (regression, machine-learning, network analyses) that could be used on calibrating pathways in the model identified
- Method approaches to maximise stakeholder participation and engagement in the restoration/conservation process in this region identified
- Videos/Communication material/Pictures/Transcripts: these are needed to allow knowledge exchange with our UK team.

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- A synthesis paper drafted to be finalised post-workshop with the partnering UK team (Project leads & ECRs). Join co-authorship
- Facilitate the co-development of a systems approach framework that models direct & indirect pathways with which climate change and human decision-making impact on human well-being and biodiversity outcomes in the Sundarbans
- Bring together a UK and India cohort of early career researchers with potential for building strong and long-lasting working relationships

### **Our expectations on participants:**

- ❖ You will come prepared: This involves reading materials, which will be provided by the Indian team as a pre-workshop task regarding Sundarbans and relevant identifying literature/methods, we feel worthy to follow and you may want to introduce in your future work after the workshop.
- ❖ You are willing to learn and listen – working across disciplinary boundaries. We may split you in groups to facilitate the workshop running.
- ❖ You will aim to present your ideas, plans, and understandings during the virtual platform conference following the workshop. This will be the exciting part, as you will be able to meet our UK team members and exchange knowledge with them.
- ❖ This workshop is expected NOT to be only listening exercise rather would be treated as an interacting platform where widely diverse and interdisciplinary approaches would always be preferred.
- ❖ Not necessarily, you need to like trees/mangroves/coastal landscapes/marine epi-fauna but we promise to make you love these features and correlate/link/expand your research to this field of building eco-resilience through eco-restoration.

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## Eligibility criteria:

- Applications must be submitted using the Researcher Links application form
- Application must be submitted before the deadline mentioned
- Participants must be Early Career Researchers: Early Career Researchers are defined as holding a Ph.D. (or having equivalent research experience) and having **up to 10 years of post-PhD research experience** or **within six years of their first academic appointment**
- Expected to have participants having a research or academic position (a permanent post, research contract, or fellowship etc.) at a recognised research institution in India
- Please note that participants are expected to attend all sessions of the workshop
- Ph.D. in fields (geography, environmental sciences, social science, anthropology, remote sensing, oceanography, coastal management, botany, zoology, biochemistry, ecology, landscape or restoration ecology, applied/environmental microbiology, data analyses or any other field, which is relevant to the theme and objectives of the workshop) allied disciplines from across India and UK
- **We expect early career researchers to have been awarded their Ph.D. not more than 10 years prior to the workshop, but allowances can be made for career breaks.** If a researcher does not hold a Ph.D. but has research experience equivalent to a Ph.D. holder and works in a field where a Ph.D. is not a prerequisite for established research activity, they can still be considered eligible
- Preference will be given to young researchers initiating independent research in recognized institutions in India
- Participants should be physically fit for field work and should be ready to accept the uncertain adverse field conditions

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## Selection:

**Applications** will be processed through a selection based on the following criteria apart from the eligibility criteria:

- Skills/discipline of applicant: our aim is to maximise diversity of disciplines and method approaches we can explore during the workshop
- Relevance of workshop to the applicant's career plan
- Understanding of topic: conceptually or method wise
- More than 3 applicants from the same institution is not preferred
- Young academicians, post-doctoral research scholars, and professionals interested in advancing their research in the interdisciplinary area of developing eco-resilience/eco-restoration would be preferred
- Motivation and contribution to the aims of the workshop
- Ability to disseminate workshop's outcomes

## Our leads, mentors and experts of the workshop:

### India:

Prof. C.R. Babu, University of Delhi  
Prof. S. K. Barik, NBRI, Lucknow  
Prof. K. Kathiresan, Annamalai University  
Prof. Tuhin Ghosh, Jadavpur University  
Prof. Punyasloke Bhadury, IISER, Kolkata  
Prof. Kartik Shanker, IISc, Bangalore  
Dr. Jagdish Krishnaswamy, IIHS, Bangalore  
Dr. Priyadarsanan Dharmarajan, ATREE, Bangalore  
Dr. Suresh Babu, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Delhi  
Dr. Sandip Kumar Basak, SCC, Dhaniakhali  
Dr. Krishna Ray, WBSU

### U.K.:

Dr. Marion Pfeifer, Newcastle University  
Prof. Andy Large, Newcastle University  
Dr. Zarah Pattison, Newcastle University  
Prof Yit Arn Teh, Newcastle University  
Prof. David Burslem, University of Aberdeen

**Please send your application email with your latest CV and the following application format filled latest within 25<sup>th</sup> of December, 2021 to Dr Krishna Ray ([krishna@wbsu.ac.in](mailto:krishna@wbsu.ac.in)) and Dr Marion Pfeifer ([marion.pfeifer@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:marion.pfeifer@newcastle.ac.uk)). We will independently assess your applications against set criteria and will check with the wider team. Ask for receipt of email to make sure that we have found it in our inbox and follow it up, if needed.**

**Final decisions will be announced by latest 26/12. You will then be briefed on the next steps. We look forward to meeting you!**

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## Workshop Application Form

### 1. Applicant

Name and Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

*(only for statistical purposes. This will not affect choice of participants)*

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Brief CV:

(Academic career, publications, markers of esteem, any other relevant information- no more than half-page of A4).

2. Abstract- Summary of your area of research related to the core theme of this workshop (max 150 words).
3. Please describe your motivation for attending the workshop and how the workshop matches your professional development needs (max 150 words).
4. Please describe the expected impact of your participation on your personal and professional development, including your ability to work internationally (max 150 words).
5. Please indicate how you will disseminate the outcomes of the workshop and the new knowledge/skills you have acquired (150 words). Contd...

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6. Workshops will take place in English as standard. Please indicate your ability to work and communicate in English:

Native Speaker

Excellent

Good

Need Support

7. Please use this space to give any additional information that you feel is relevant for the application:

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