



SCHOOL OF SUSTAINABLE
FOOD SYSTEMS

AAETI

NATIONAL CONCLAVE

SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

October 27-29, 2025

Anil Agarwal Environment Training Institute,
Nimli, Rajasthan



KEY SPEAKERS



AJAY VIR JAKHAR,

Chairperson, Bharat Krishak Samaj

Ajay Vir Jakhar is a farmer based in Village Maujgarh, Punjab. He is the Chairperson of Bharat Krishak Samaj (Farmers' Forum India). He has had a lifelong association with the cooperative movement and is the president of The Abohar Cooperative Marketing Society Ltd. based in Abohar. He is also a member of a multi-state cooperative society PARAS. He is on the advisory board of EAT Foundation, Stockholm. He was earlier the Chairman of the Punjab State Farmers' and Farm Workers' Commission, a statutory body to advise the State Government of Punjab, India. He was also appointed the Vice Chair of Action Track 2 of the UN Food Systems Summit 2021.



AKASH BADAVE,

Chief Executive Officer, Nirmaan,
Dantewada, Chhattisgarh

An engineer from BITS-Pilani, worked briefly in the corporates before joining the Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellowship (PMRDF) under the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. Was posted in Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh from year 2012 to 2016, during which work on organic farming was started & led to the emergence of the farmers' collective - Bhoomgaadi. Chose to stay back in Dantewada to continue working with the tribal communities and has since been working with Bhoomgaadi, and leading Nirmaan Organization's initiatives focused on indigenous seeds, millets, alternative markets, and landscape level transformation of Dantewada towards agroecology.



ADITYA SHAH,
Global Director, Partnerships, Cropin,
Bangalore

Aditya Shah serves as the Global Director - Strategic Partnerships at Cropin, where he plays a transformative role in driving technological innovation in agriculture. With over 15 years of experience, including co-founding a startup, Aditya brings a deep passion for revolutionizing the agricultural landscape through cutting-edge solutions that empower farmers and farming enterprises.

With Cropin, Aditya focuses on advancing the adoption of smart agri-tech solutions, enabling stakeholders across the agricultural value chain to enhance productivity, sustainability, and profitability.

By leveraging technology, Aditya and Cropin are reshaping how agriculture is practiced, introducing innovations like data-driven insights, precision farming, and digital platforms that enable real-time decision-making. His work contributes to empowering farmers, enterprises and governments with tools to improve yield quality, manage resources efficiently, and build resilience against climate uncertainties, fostering a brighter and more sustainable future for agriculture worldwide.



ANAND SHARMA,
Former Additional Director General/
Scientist-G, India Meteorological
Department (IMD), Delhi

Mr Anand Sharma worked as Scientist-G/Head, RMC, IMD, New Delhi/Additional Director General. He also worked as the Head of Social Media/Training Division/School Project/Agromet Division. He also worked as Deputy Director General of Meteorology at the Regional Meteorological Centre, New Delhi. He was the founder Director of Meteorological Centre, Dehra Dun (2002 to 2015). He received M.Phil. Degree in Environmental Sciences from Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi and M.Sc. Degree in Agricultural Meteorology, from PAU, Ludhiana and BSc. (H) from University of Delhi. Anand Sharma is the recipient of National Scholarship, GATE fellowship and UNDP /WMO fellowship. His main areas of interests are Weather Prediction, Crop weather simulation, Agro advisories, Mountain Meteorology, Early Warning of Extreme Weather Phenomenon, Disaster Management, and Environmental security and awareness. Dr. Sharma has been trained in USA (Early Warning), France and India in weather forecasting and extreme weather prediction.

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AMIT KHURANA,
Heads CSE's Sustainable Food
Systems Programme

Amit Khurana heads CSE's Sustainable Food Systems Programme. A member of CSE's top management group for almost a decade, Amit has been working to push for necessary change in policy and practice towards food systems, which are sustainable for livelihood of farmers, health of people and the environment and climate. He mainly focuses on containing antimicrobial resistance from food systems and environmental routes and upscaling agroecology-based and resilient agriculture. He engages with stakeholders in India, Asia and Africa and also informs global discourse and guidance.



ANANDA TEERTHA PYATI,
Founding Member, Sahaja
Samrudha, Mysore, Karnataka

Ananda Teertha Pyati has been an active and influential person in Kannada journalism for over 25 years. He served as the Chief Sub-Editor of a leading Kannada daily and has consistently focused on issues concerning the environment, agri-biodiversity conservation, agriculture, and rural development. In recognition of his impactful reporting, he was honoured with the State-Level Environmental Journalist Award in 2017. A passionate advocate for sustainable agriculture, Mr Pyati has authored over fifteen books covering themes such as organic farming, traditional water conservation methods, and the preservation of indigenous seed varieties. His international exposure includes study visits to Thailand, France, Switzerland, Italy, and Israel, where he explored advancements in agricultural technology and farmer markets.

He is the Founder Director of 'Sahaja Organics', a Farmer Producer Company.

Currently, Pyati is actively involved in grassroots initiatives, having formed several farmer groups to promote organic farming in the Koppal district. He is also leading efforts to establish a Producers' Collective in Koppal and Dharwad district, aimed at connecting organic farmers directly with markets and strengthening rural livelihoods through sustainable practices.



APOORVA,
Global Lead (Agriculture and Climate)
for the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF)

Apoorva is currently the Global Lead (Agriculture and Climate) for the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF). His role is to provide thematic technical support to country units, long term strategic thinking and partnership development in Sustainable Agriculture, Water management and Climate Resilience.

Before joining AKF in May 2022, Apoorva was the CEO of AKRSP (Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (India)) from September 2001. AKRSP India was established by His Highness in 1984 and improves the quality of life for rural communities in more than 3500 villages of the states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra. He continues to be on the Board of AKRSP.

Besides this, Apoorva has promoted and supported many civil society organisations and networks. Networks on coastal salinity (CSPC) and women's land rights (WGWLO) have grown substantially. He is on the Board of NGO's like ACT, SWATI, WaterAid India, CSPC, Gyanshala, SESTA and on the advisory committee of the National Coalition for Natural Farming (NCNF) and RCRC.

He has also served on several committees appointed by the Government of India for Rural drinking water promotion, watershed development, rural livelihoods, forest management, irrigation management etc.

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DR SABYASACHI DAS,
National Coordinator of Revitalising
Rainfed Agriculture (RRA) Network,
based at Hyderabad

Dr Sabyasachi Das is National Coordinator of Revitalising Rainfed Agriculture (RRA) Network, based at Hyderabad. Sabyasachi has been Director of WASSAN over a decade. His expertise focus on policy deliberation and public investment on Rainfed Agriculture agenda including Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Natural Resource Management, Biodiversity.

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ANJUL CHAUDHARI
Development Practitioner,
intersection of natural farming,
community systems, and
decentralized governance

Anjul Chaudhari is a development practitioner working at the intersection of natural farming, community systems, and decentralized governance. He has facilitated multi-stakeholder collaborations through the National Coalition for Natural Farming (NCNF), engaging CSOs, government institutions, and farmer networks across multiple states. His work involves evidence generation, policy engagement, and strengthening community-led extension models such as CRPs and BRCs. He has contributed to knowledge systems, government scheme mapping, and capacity building initiatives, and has previously supported state-level implementation processes. Anjul brings a practitioner-oriented approach rooted in field engagement and systems thinking.



ASHISH GUPTA,
Co-founder, Gram Disha Trust, Mandi,
Himachal Pradesh

A part-time organic farmer in Himachal Pradesh, he is the Founding Trustee of CSO Gram Disha Trust (2018). Over the last 16 years he has supported capacity building and market linkage for over 3000 farmers across India - through a network of Market Linkage Models. His international work includes extensive collaboration with organizations like FAO, IFOAM-OI, and INRAe, where he designed digital platforms for sustainable food systems, developed global e-learning modules, and facilitated capacity building for government officials across Africa and Central Asia. In India, Gupta-jee has advised government bodies on organic food regulations and agroecology curriculum for Natural Farming in state Universities. He pioneered the SHIKAR-Stack and "CETARA-NF" Certification technology systems for the Government of Himachal Pradesh, creating traceability for over a million farmers.

He currently mentors engineers on IoT and AI solutions designed to reduce cost and complexity for smallholder farmers in the Himalayas, preserving ecological sustainability while driving economic empowerment. He is also supporting research on the True Price Discovery model called "MoolyaSHIKHAR" with a state University in Himachal Pradesh for smallholders.



ANIL UPPALAPATI
Program Officer at WASSAN

Anil Uppalapati is a Program Officer at WASSAN, working at the intersection of climate change, sustainable food systems, and community resilience. With a deep commitment to rural development, he is actively involved in design and implementation programs that strengthen regenerative agriculture, enhance nutrition, and empower smallholder farmers across India. His work is rooted in the belief that climate action must begin with those most affected—farmers, women, and indigenous communities. Anil brings together research, field practice, and policy engagement to promote inclusive and locally driven solutions. Alongside his development work, he is a storyteller who captures lived experiences and community voices to drive social change. Through narratives that highlight hope, struggle, and innovation, Anil aims to make the invisible visible and reframe how development is understood and pursued. His work bridges the technical and the emotional, the systemic and the personal, contributing to a more just and resilient food systems and social change.



DARSHAN WAGHELA,
Sr. Data Scientist, WeatherCast Solutions
Pvt. Ltd, Mumbai, Maharashtra

Darshan Waghela is a Senior Data Scientist at WeatherCast Solutions, where he leads the development of our patented model PRAVAH (Physics-driven AI Model for Value-Added Hyperlocal Forecasts) for hyperlocal weather forecasting and precision farming. WeatherCast is an IIT Bombay spinoff, born out Prof. Sridhar Balasubramanian's lab, faculty in the Mechanical engg dept. Darshan joined Prof. Sridhar when WeatherCast had just gotten incorporated and he's an integral part of the core technical team working on embedding physical principles into data-driven models. Currently Darshan manages his team and works on advancing data-driven weather intelligence and its applications in multiple areas such as agriculture, renewable energy, etc. His work has contributed to WeatherCast's endeavor to deliver hyperlocal weather insights, support agri-decision systems, and enhance climate resilience for farming communities across several states in India.

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DR. DEVINDER K. SADANA,
Founder of the Indigenous Livestock
Society, India

Dr. Devinder K. Sadana is the Founder of the Indigenous Livestock Society, India. Graduate in Agriculture, doctorate in Animal Genetics & Breeding, Dr. Sadana worked on conservation of India's indigenous livestock breeds by identifying 13 new breeds of Cattle, Buffalo, Sheep, Goat and Donkey. Worked as Research Scientist in ICAR- National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources at Karnal in Haryana. Post-superannuation in 2014, he founded Indigenous Livestock Society-India, Karnal. Presently working in Agroecology and Regenerative Agriculture at community level by developing, since 2018, a network of farmers and farmer-groups in Himachal Pradesh state. He is also a Board Member of Sahjeevan-CfP (NGO) in Bhuj and Sr. Consultant with RySS on Livestock-Natural Farming integration.

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DR BHUPENDRA PHONDBA,
Scientist-III (Animal Nutrition, National
Dairy Development Board, Anand,
Gujarat

Dr Bhupendra Phondba is Scientist-III (Animal Nutrition, National Dairy Development Board, Anand, Gujarat. He did his PhD in Animal Nutrition from NDRI, Karnal, and has gained a significant applied research, training and field experience while working in NDDB since 2010. His core competencies include improving environmental sustainability of smallholder dairying through animal nutrition interventions. Key focus areas are greenhouse gas emissions accounting, methane mitigation, improving carbon and water footprints of milk production. He is actively engaged in training and capacity building of smallholder farmers, and also serving as a member of various technical committees of the International Dairy Federation (IDF).

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DR. SUNIL KUMAR DUBEY,
Deputy Director, Mahalanobis
National Crop Forecast Centre
(MNCFC), Department of Agriculture
& Farmers Welfare, Ministry of
Agriculture, Government of India

Dr. Sunil Kumar Dubey serves as a Deputy Director at the Mahalanobis National Crop Forecast Centre (MNCFC), under the Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India.

Dr. Dubey earned his Ph.D. in Climatology and Biophysical modelling from Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Uttarakhand. With over nine years of experience, his expertise encompasses of Agriculture insurance, Risk assessment, Crop modelling, Crop yield forecasting, use of innovative technologies to support India's Crop Insurance program i.e. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, and the application of innovative technologies in agriculture, including AI/ML, remote sensing, and digital farming. He is actively involved in projects related to optimizing crop yield estimation through geospatial technology and has contributed to various publications in this field. Dr. Dubey is acting as Member Secretary in many of National initiatives related to crop insurance like YESTECH, WINDS & CROPIC.



DR. KULWINDER KAUR GILL
Principal Agrometeorologist obtained
Ph.D.in Agricultural Meteorology, Punjab
Agricultural University (PAU) Ludhiana

Dr. Kulwinder Kaur Gill, Principal Agrometeorologist obtained Ph.D.in Agricultural Meteorology in 2002 from Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) Ludhiana. She has been on the faculty of Agricultural Meteorology (Department of Climate Change and Agril. Meteorology, PAU) since 2004 and worked on weather forecasting and agro-advisory services in Gramin Krishi Mausam Sewa (GKMS) project funded by MoES since the beginning. She has authored more than 120 research papers, 5 research bulletins, 3 book chapters along with many research reports, booklets, pamphlets and more than 50 popular articles. She has presented papers in several national/international symposia, seminars and conferences and attended several workshops. She also organized Virtual AGMET conference in 2021 and many other training programs with ICAR, NIDM, GIZ etc. She has delivered about 80 training lectures, and more than 20 TV and radio talks. Additionally, she has created an extensive farmer database which she regularly updates with weather forecast and agro-advisory messages. She is also working as Editor of PAU's weekly digital newspaper 'Kheti Sandesh' and published 400 issues having outreach of 9 lakh farmers of the state.



DR. JAYDIP ROKADE,
Sr. Scientist (Poultry Science), ICAR-
Central Avian Research Institute, Bareilly,
Uttar Pradesh

Dr. Jaydip Rokade is Sr. Scientist (Poultry Science), ICAR-Central Avian Research Institute, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh. He did his master's degree in Poultry Science from TANUVAS, Chennai during 2009-2011. Later, he obtained Doctorate Degree in Poultry Science from 2011 to 2014 from the ICAR-IVRI & joined as Agriculture Research Scientist at ICAR-Central Avian Research Institute, Bareilly in July 2014. Dr. Jaydip has published more than 70 research articles having more than Six NAAS ratings in national and international peer-reviewed journals. Dr. Jaydip is involved in more than 15 research projects from various funding agencies which leads to many tangible products like CARL-Comfort, CARL Sweet Egg Sausage, CARL Egg Peda, CARL Chicken Meat Baddi, CARL Toxomin, CARL Egg Shield and CARIBRO Samrudhi etc

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DR. R.N. CHATTERJEE,
Director, ICAR-Directorate of Poultry
Research

He has obtained M.V.Sc. degree in Animal Genetics and Breeding from IVRI, Izatnagar and Doctoral degree from Veterinary College, Mathura campus, C.S.Azad University of Agriculture and Technology, Kanpur, India. He has visited ten countries including as a member of the delegation of Government of India to Indonesia, Zambia, Netherlands's, Nodal officer of Poultry of SAARC countries etc. He has also been member of Cabinet subcommittee for Telangana Government for Poultry development, Member of Board of Management of PVNRT Veterinary University Senior Vice President of WPSA. He was honoured with four National Awards i.e. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed Award (ICAR), ICAR Award for Team Research, Hari Om Ashram Trust Award (ICAR) and Best Poultry Professional Award (Agricultural Today). He is a fellow of the National Academy of Veterinary Sciences (NAVS) and the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS). He is also awarded with 10 society awards.



DR. MAHESH C. MEENA,
Principal Scientist, Division of
Soil Science & Agri. Chemistry,
ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research
Institute, Delhi

Dr Mahesh C. Meena has made significant and useful contributions in the area of soil health assessment, nutrient management and plant nutrition. He contributed significantly in developing important technologies include zinc fortification in grain, induced defoliation in extra-short duration pigeonpea, scheduling of N application, developing site-specific nutrient management options, integrated nutrient management and development of nutrient management protocols for conservation agriculture.



DR. PRADEEP MALIK,
Principal Scientist and Head,
Bioenergetics and Environmental
Sciences Division at the ICAR-National
Institute of Animal Nutrition and
Physiology, Bangalore

Dr. Pradeep Malik is currently Principal Scientist and Head, Bioenergetics and Environmental Sciences Division at the ICAR-National Institute of Animal Nutrition and Physiology, Bangalore. He holds Ph.D. in Animal Nutrition from the National Dairy Research Institute (India), M.Sc. degree from the GB Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar. Dr. Pradeep Malik did his postdoc from the University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia in 2014-15 and also worked at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, Australia as visiting scientist in 2009. His research majorly focus on the measurement and mitigation of enteric methane emissions from livestock using plant secondary metabolites, phyto-sources, agricultural wastes, and seaweeds.

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DR. LAXMAN SINGH RATHORE
Former Director General of Meteorology,
India Meteorological Department (IMD),
Ministry of Earth Sciences

Dr. Laxman Singh Rathore is former Director General of Meteorology, India Meteorological Department (IMD), Ministry of Earth Sciences. He has served various international bodies such as Director General of Meteorology (2012-2016), Chair, (Acting: During 2017-19) Inter-governmental Board for Climate Services (IBCS), WMO, United Nations (UN), etc.

Made significant contribution towards improving the weather & climate prediction, particularly extreme weather events. He played a lead role in application of weather & climate in various sectors including agriculture, water, disaster reduction, health, power, environment conservation etc. Played key role in development of Agro-meteorological Advisory Service.

Published more than 100 research papers, wrote 11 books and 41 book chapters and participated in.



HIMANSHU CHATURVEDI,
Manager-Projects and Strategic
Alliance, Varaha

Himanshu Chaturvedi is a Manager in the Partnerships team at Varaha, where he leads initiatives across the industrial biochar portfolio. He has played a key role in Varaha's landmark achievement of delivering over 100,000 biochar carbon credits and continues to drive the expansion of large-scale industrial biochar projects. Before joining Varaha, Himanshu worked as an Associate Product Manager at a multinational software firm, leading the digitization of customer service for global enterprises. A Chemical Engineer from BITS Pilani and a bronze medalist of his batch, Himanshu combines his technical and product expertise to develop technology-powered carbon projects that ensure credible, traceable, and high-impact climate outcomes.



JAI RANA,
Senior Scientist and Country
Representative for India, Alliance
Bioversity-CIAT, CGIAR

Dr. Jai Chand Rana is a renowned expert in genetics and plant breeding. He earned his M.Sc. and Ph.D. from Himachal Pradesh Agriculture University, Palampur, and completed his post-doctorate in molecular plant breeding from South China Agricultural University, Guangzhou. Currently, he serves as Country Director at the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, India.

He developed 18 crop varieties, secured 6 patents, and registered 32 genetic stocks and 359 farmers' varieties. He facilitated GI tags for 3 native rice varieties and conducted over 40 plant explorations, introducing 10,000+ accessions. His work in trait introgression and pre-breeding spans crops like Cicer, Brassica, and Capsicum.

He has promoted native crops diversity on over 2 lakh hectares involving 90,000+ farmers, established 50+ community seed banks, and enabled branding of native produce. His efforts range from nutrition profiling, ecosystem service valuation, to agrobiodiversity metrics.



K. S. GREWAL,
General Manager - National Sales,
KeggFarms Pvt Ltd, Gurugram, Haryana

K. S. Grewal, is General Manager - National Sales, KeggFarms Pvt Ltd, Gurugram, Haryana. He leads national and regional programmes in Sales, Marketing, and Institutional Outreach. With over 17 years at Keggfarms, he has been instrumental in advancing inclusive poultry-based livelihood models that empower women, improve household nutrition, and strengthen rural economies across diverse geographies in India and beyond. He works closely with governments, multilateral agencies, and development partners to design and scale poultry interventions that align with state and national livelihood missions. His expertise spans sustainable livestock practices, large-scale programme delivery, and rural development through poultry innovation. Dr. Grewal holds a BVSc (Bachelor of Veterinary Science) from Punjab Agricultural University, an MVSc (Master of Veterinary Science) from Gujarat Agricultural University, and an Executive Programme in Management from MDI Gurgaon. He continues to contribute actively to policy dialogues on livelihoods, food security, and animal health.

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KAVITHA KURUGANTI,
Co-Convenor, Alliance for Sustainable
and Holistic Agriculture (ASHA-Kisan
Swaraj), Bengaluru, Karnataka

Kavitha Kuruganti is with the Alliance for Sustainable & Holistic Agriculture (ASHA-Kisan Swaraj). She is an activist working on sustainable farm livelihoods and farmers' rights for more than 3 decades now. She participates actively in people's movements related to rural livelihoods, campaigns against unsustainable and unsafe agricultural technologies, and is also involved actively in constructive work related to alternatives. She has been part of Committees/Task Forces of Government of India as well as state governments on issues pertaining to farming.

Kavitha Kuruganti is with the Alliance for Sustainable & Holistic Agriculture (ASHA-Kisan Swaraj). She is an activist working on sustainable farm livelihoods and farmers' rights for more than 3 decades now. She participates actively in people's movements related to rural livelihoods, campaigns against unsustainable and unsafe agricultural technologies, and is also involved actively in constructive work related to alternatives. She has been part of Committees/Task Forces of Government of India as well as state governments on issues pertaining to farming.

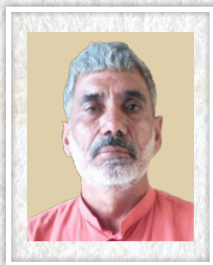


KIRAN KUMAR VISSA,
Co-Founder, Rythu Swarajya Vedika,
Telangana and Andhra Pradesh

Kirankumar Vissa is an engineer-turned-social activist working for farmers' rights and sustainable livelihoods. He is a co-founder of Rythu Swarajya Vedika (RSV), a farmers' organization based in the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. He is also a national co-convenor of Alliance for Sustainable & Holistic Agriculture (ASHA).

Kiran has been working on issues such as farmer suicides, recognition of tenant farmers and women farmers, crop insurance and impact of natural disasters on farmers.

Kiran has been a member of the sub-committees on Sustainable Agriculture and Agricultural Credit constituted by the Union government for Doubling of Farmers' Income. He has published several articles in newspapers and magazines, and has helped organize a number of policy workshops and conferences on agricultural issues.



KEETACHARYA,
Pest Expert

A dedicated Keetacharya (Pest Expert) with a passion for spreading knowledge about pests and organic farming among farmers. His career objective is to Educate farmers about the different types of pests and their control methods; Provide hands-on training to farmers on organic farming techniques; Assist and lead farmers in adopting sustainable and organic farming practices for improved agricultural outcomes.



MANJEET,
Subject matter specialist -
Agrometeorology, KVK, Shikohpur,
Gurugram, Haryana

Dr. Manjeet has about two year ten month experience as a Subject Matter Specialist in ICAR-IARI, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Gurugram Haryana and three month thirteen days as Senior Research Fellow at KVK, Mahendergarh, Haryana under CCS, HAU, Hisar. He did M.Sc. (2019) and Ph.D. (2022) in Agricultural Meteorology from Chaudhary Charan Singh, Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar, Haryana. Best Article Award in 2020 given by Agriculture and food e-Newsletter. Best Ph.D. thesis Award in International Conference- (IAAHAS-2023) organized by Just Agriculture, SGT University, Gurugram & ISAHRD, Chandigarh. Attended training on Apiculture, Organic farming from A. G. Agro & Tech, Hoshiarpur, Punjab. Has published 15 researches or review paper in reputed national and international journal, 04 Book chapters, 04 popular articles, 02 National and 02 International conferences, 16 number of training in different agricultural field.

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NITIN MUKUND KUMBHAR,
Watershed Organisation Trust (WOTR),
Pune, Maharashtra

Dr. Nitin Kumbhar is a Programme Manager at the WOTR Centre for Resilience Studies (W-CReS), where he leads initiatives on sustainable agriculture, climate-smart practices, and soil management. With over 12 years of experience in agricultural research and field-based innovation, he has significantly contributed to the development of Android-based platforms for real-time agrometeorological advisories, enhancing the precision and accessibility of weather-based crop management practices. Dr. Kumbhar has authored several research papers, book chapters, and technical articles, contributing meaningfully to the advancement of resilient and climate-adaptive farming systems.

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NARENDRANATH DAMODARAN,
National Anchor, National Coalition for
Natural Farming, Delhi

Narendranath is the National Anchor of the National Coalition on Natural Farming, a network of over 250 leading organisations driving large-scale transitions to agroecological farming to address climate change. He now also chairs the RRA Network and sits on many NGO boards. His special focus is on fostering civil society coalitions.



RAJINDER CHAUDHARY
Retired Professor of Economics, MD
University, Rohtak, Haryana

Rajinder Chaudhary is retired Professor of Economics, MD University, Rohtak (Haryana) and since 2009 have been promoting self-reliant organic farming in Haryana as Advisor to Kudarti Khsti Abhiyan, Haryana, which is an unregistered, unfunded voluntary organisation working in Haryana



RAJESH KRISHNAN,
Chief Executive Officer, Thirunelly
Agri Producer Company Ltd.
(TAPCO), Wayanad, Kerala

Rajesh Krishnan is the CEO of Thirunelly Agri Producer Company Ltd. (TAPCO), a farmer producer company based out of Wayanad district of Kerala. The FPC focuses on the expansion of Organic farming and traditional paddy varieties of Wayanad by trying to address the two main uncertainties of Markets and Climate. TAPCO won the Best FPO award by the Kerala Govt in 2024 for its range of initiatives from seed to markets.

An ecologist by qualification (Masters from the Salim Ali School of Ecology, Pondicherry University) Rajesh is a firm believer in the collective pursuit of sustainable farming and rural livelihoods. His desire to build bridges between agricultural-environmental practices and policies, finds him prioritising the farm and the various working/policy groups at the gram panchayath and national level, equally. For his inspiring contribution in the field of farming, he was awarded the State Youth Icon award in 2017 by the Kerala state government.

Rajesh is in the steering group of Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture (ASHA), a nation wide network on sustainable agriculture and sustenance of farm livelihoods. He is a member of the National Executive Council of National Mission on Natural Farming.

Before moving to Wayanad in 2015, he worked with Greenpeace India for 10 years in various capacities in the Sustainable Agriculture Campaign.



RAMANJANEYULU GV
Executive Director, Centre for Sustainable
Agriculture, Hyderabad, Telangana

Ramanjaneyulu GV, Executive Director, Centre for Sustainable Agriculture, Hyderabad, Telangana. Agricultural Scientist with specialization in agroecology, organic/natural farming, agribusiness management and public policy. His work has been in designing community managed extension, enterprises, and programs. His work also includes innovations in organic/natural farming practices, institutional systems, Digital tools for extension and agribusiness management. He holds a Ph.D. in Agriculture from Indian Agricultural Research Institute, BSc (Ag) and MSc (Ag) from Andhra Pradesh Agricultural University and currently is the Executive Director at Centre for Sustainable Agriculture.



RANA SINGH
Natural Farming Scientist and
Program Manager at Shramik Bharti

He is a Natural Farming Scientist and Program Manager at Shramik Bharti, where he leads projects focused on sustainable agriculture, ecological restoration, and rural development. With extensive experience in promoting natural and regenerative farming practices, I work closely with farming communities to nurture soil health, strengthen local ecosystems, and foster harmony between humans and nature.

A dedicated practitioner of Madhyasth Darshan (Philosophy of Coexistence), he integrates its value-based and holistic principles into both professional work and personal life. He is also the Founder of Mother India Public School, where he promotes value-based rural education and has established a natural agriculture learning farm in my native village to inspire young minds.

As the author of "Hariya", a book based on the Awartansheel method of natural farming, he continues to document and share practices that support ecological balance, farmer prosperity, and sustainable food systems.



RAKESH SINGH,
Seasoned development
professional, Rural development
sector, specializing in Climate
Smart Agriculture (CSA), women's
empowerment and livelihood
promotion

Rakesh Singh is a seasoned development professional with 18 years of experience in the rural development sector, specializing in Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA), women's empowerment and livelihood promotion.

As a Program Manager at SRIJAN, he leads the Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) theme, where he has designed and implemented innovative models that promote sustainable farming practices, soil and water conservation, and climate resilience among smallholder farmers. Rakesh played a key role in conceptualizing and institutionalizing the Bio Resource Center (BRC) model, a knowledge and support hub that has now been scaled across multiple project locations to strengthen field teams and farmer outreach under CSA initiatives.

Over the years, Rakesh has contributed to building sustainable community institutions and fostering strong networks between NGOs and government departments to ensure convergence and long-term impact.



SHANLANG F LYNGDOH,

Chief Operating Officer– Livelihood,
Meghalaya State Rural Livelihoods
Society

Since 2013, has been working as Chief Operating Officer of MSRLS, an agency of the Govt. of Meghalaya, India - implementing The National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) of Ministry of Rural Development Government of India which works to design & implement livelihood program and strategies the livelihood of rural Communities, addressing climate resilience, building network for dovetailing of projects for sustainable development. And from 2022 we have initiated the implementation of natural farming in the state as nodal officer to coordinate the programme with NGOs and government agencies.



SHIRISH JOSHI,

Co-convenor, Consortium for
Agroecological Transformations

He has been an advisor, consultant and evaluator in the domain of capacity building, institutional development, and strategy development for social organisations connected with animal husbandry, entrepreneurship development, FPO promotion, watershed development, rainfed agriculture, agro ecology, women empowerment, micro finance, health and education. On the other hand, he has contributed to policies on making markets work for small and marginal farmers. He is an advisor for the Bharat Agro ecology Fund (BAF).

In the last twenty-two years, he is involved with networks like National coalition for natural farming, Revitalisation of rainfed areas network, CSOs like BAIF, AKRSP, WASSAN, CSA, Vaagdhara, Catalyst group, Vivekananda Kendra; CBOs like MAHAFFPC and Odisha government. His work and interest has taken him to twenty-six states and union territories in India as well as sixteen countries in the world.



SUNITA NARAIN,

Director General, Centre for Science
and Environment (CSE)

Sunita Narain has been with Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) since 1982, and is a leading voice from the Global South on issues of environment and development. Narain is also the editor of Down To Earth, a fortnightly magazine that CSE helps publish.

For her lifelong work, Narain has been awarded the Padma Shri, one of India's highest official civilian honours. She is also a recipient of the Stockholm Water Prize, the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation Award, and the Edinburgh Medal.

Narain is a Member of the Global Leader's Group on AMR. Through her research, writings and advocacy, Narain has been influential in building public opinion on the challenges and solutions for environment, particularly in countries of the Global South. In her over four decades of work, she has directed campaigns and action for containing air pollution, encouraging community water management and advocating pesticide regulation. Her efforts are aimed at combining science-based evidence and solutions with a pro-poor perspective to mainstream environmental concerns in public policy and society.

Her ideas have gained wide acceptance, leading to a slew of policy and regulatory measures that are built on the premise that sustainable development is not possible without inclusive and equitable growth.

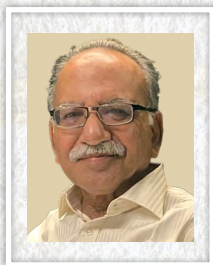


SRAJESH GUPTA,

Co-founder and Anchor, Centre
for Grower-centric Eco-value
Mechanisms (C-GEM), Ahmedabad,
Gujarat

Srajesht Gupta is the director and founder of C-GEM, a strategic non-profit scaling agroecology by enabling carbon markets for communities. He comes with over seven years of experience working with multiple organizations in the agriculture programme, policy and academic space. In his last assignment, he worked with National Coalition for Natural Farming as a founding Associate.

He holds an MSc in Agricultural Extension and Communication (Raipur); a PGD in Public Policy, Design, and Management from Indian School of Public Policy (New Delhi); Certificate in International Development from University of Chicago (USA); and Certificate in Accelerated Management Programme from Harappa School of Leadership (New Delhi).



SUDHIR KUMAR GOEL,

Ex-Addl. Chief Secretary (Agriculture and Marketing), Government of Maharashtra

Sudhir Kumar Goel, Ex-Addl. Chief Secretary (Agriculture and Marketing), Government of Maharashtra. Master's in development studies, University of Bath, UK; PhD in Physics, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre. Formerly, Researcher in Nuclear Physics, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre. 1982, he joined Indian Administrative Service (IAS). He has occupied various senior positions in the state of Maharashtra, mostly linked to the field of Agriculture & Cooperation, including 7 years as Agriculture Commissioner; 6 years as Commissioner and Secretary, Cooperatives; Director-General, special project tackling suicide among farmers, Vidarbha; Principal Secretary and then Additional Chief Secretary of Agriculture, responsible for attracting investment in the State of Maharashtra in the field of integrated value chains.

He has extensive experience working on various projects funded by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and International Fund for Agriculture Development. Presently he is working as a freelance consultant in establishing Agri-value chains since retiring from service in June 2015.



SUBHASHEESH RAWAT,

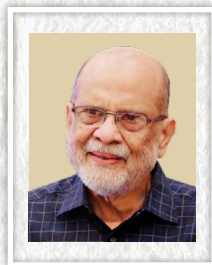
Vice President - Claims, HDFC ERGO General Insurance, Mumbai, Maharashtra

Subhasheesh Rawat currently serves as the Vice President and National Manager – Rural Claims & Underwriting at HDFC ERGO General Insurance. A seasoned leader in the field of rural and agricultural insurance, with over two decades of experience spanning crop, weather, parametric and livestock insurance portfolios across India.

His strategic leadership has been instrumental in transforming claims management processes, enhancing operational efficiency, and driving innovation in rural insurance products.

He has played a pivotal role in government committees on crop insurance, contributing to policy evolution and implementation at the national level. His efforts have led to the successful launch of new verticals and improved claim verification standards through automation and co-witnessing practices.

Over the career span, consistently delivering results in business development, stakeholder engagement, and rural outreach.



SULTAN ISMAIL,

Managing Director, Ecoscience Research Foundation, Chennai

Sultan Ahmed Ismail, Ph.D, D.Sc., is a soil biologist and soil biotechnologist. Teaching since 1974 and researching in soils since 1978-79 he is one of the pioneers in vermiculture and earthworm studies in India. Please Google his name for more information about his work.



SHESHKUMAR GOROSHI,

Scientist-E, Agro-Advisory Service Division, India Meteorological Department (IMD), Delhi

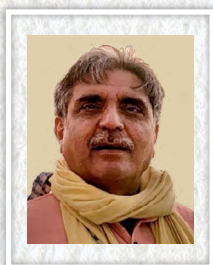
Dr. Sheshakumar Goroshi, Scientist-E in the Agromet Advisory Services Division at India Meteorological Department (IMD), New Delhi, is an expert in agrometeorology, with diverse work experience across fields such as Climate change, Forest Meteorology, Remote Sensing and Agricultural insurance. He holds an M.Sc. in Agrometeorology and a Ph.D. in Ecology. Before joining IMD, Dr. Goroshi worked with national and international institutes of repute such as Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers (CGIAR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) focusing on agricultural monitoring, Agromet product development and Agromet advisories ultimately contributing to sustainable agriculture and farmers resilience. He has contributed significantly to the development of agrometeorological advisory services under the Gramin Krishi Mausam Sewa (GKMS) scheme. Dr. Goroshi is also a core member of the RA II (Asia) Working Group on Weather, Climate, Water, and Related Services of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). He has authored over 30 publications.

[in https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-sheshakumar-goroshi-090155a/?originalSubdomain=in](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-sheshakumar-goroshi-090155a/?originalSubdomain=in)

**TARA SRIRAM**

Lead Program Officer, Program Management Department at Verra

Tara Sriram works as a Lead Program Officer with the Natural Climate Solutions Certification team in the Program Management Department at Verra. She has been with Verra for a year and a half. She has over 14 years of experience working on AFOLU projects. She started her career with the Fair Climate Network, working closely with grassroots-level organizations across India to facilitate sustainable agricultural practices and tap into the developing carbon markets. After that, she led the Land-Use team at Value Network Ventures for 8 years, working on developing and implementing community-centric ARR, WRC, and ALM projects across India, South and Southeast Asia. She has also been involved with designing and implementing rural waste management programmes.

**UMENDRA DUTT,**

Executive Director, Kheti Virasat Mission, Faridkot, Punjab

Umendra Dutt is the Founder Member and Executive Director of Kheti Virasat Mission, Punjab, to lead a people's movement for sustainable farming, food safety and seed sovereignty. Also, he is a member of National Task Force on Organic Farming, Government of India; Executive Council, National Institute of Plant Health Management, Hyderabad and Indian Council for Forestry Research & Education, Dehradun. He organized several campaigns, workshops, public dialogues and meetings. He also undertook several small research studies to highlight the Agrarian, Ecological and Environmental health issues of the Punjab. Initiated the process of building Environment and Organic Farming movement in Punjab way back in 1996. Played instrumental role in bringing several eminent and credible people to the movement involving farmers, urban consumers, medical fraternity, environmental scientists, other activists and youth of Punjab, setting up real alternatives at grassroots in the form of ecological agriculture, clean rivers and water conservation is the result of the one decade of work put in by Kheti Virasat Mission so far.

**USHA SOOLAPANI,**

Director, Thanal, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

An expert in Horticulture sciences and passionate Agroecologist with a focus on research, documentation, and writing on agroecology, climate change, biodiversity, wilderness, politics of food and health, community wisdom and exploring peaceful co-existence. Engages in educating children and youth on ecology, culture, and sustainability in an increasingly urban world. Enjoys building networks with like-minded individuals and organizations to promote and expand ideas on sustainability and peaceful co-existence

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**UMANG AGARWAL,**

Chief Operating Officer - Carbon business, Grow Indigo

Umang Agarwal is the Chief Operating Officer for Carbon business at Grow Indigo, which works with farmers and companies to generate high-quality carbon credits and reduce Scope 3 emissions. He has 15+ years of experience across agri-food, dairy, pharma, and IT sectors. Earlier, he led digital strategy at a dairy firm, focusing on real-time operations and farmer impact. Umang holds a Ph.D. in Animal Sciences from the University of Maryland (USA), MBA from IIM Ahmedabad (India), and is a former USDA/ARS Fellow.



VIVEK SINGH,

Deputy CEO & CTO, Skymet Weather Services, NOIDA, Uttar Pradesh

Vivek Singh has over two decades of experience spanning GIS, climate science, weather analytics, and software development. A seasoned software engineer by profession, he currently serves as the Chief Technology Officer and Deputy CEO at Skymet Weather Services — India's largest private weather forecasting company. Vivek has led several national-scale IoT projects focused on weather monitoring and climate risk assessment across diverse geographies. He has applied artificial intelligence and machine learning to GIS and meteorological data to create scalable, real-world solutions for climate resilience. Passionate about technology for social impact, Vivek is spearheading the development of next-generation AI models for weather forecasting. In collaboration with global leaders like Google and Microsoft, he aims to harness cutting-edge innovations to make accurate, hyperlocal forecasts and extreme weather predictions accessible to millions of people in India, empowering communities and industries to better prepare for climate challenges.

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/vivek-singh-a126a93b/?originalSubdomain=in>



VIDYABHUSHAN PATLE,

Assistant Director (Crop Insurance),
Department Farmer Welfare and
Agriculture Development, Bhopal,
Madhya Pradesh

He holds a B. Sc. (Agriculture) from JNKVV Jabalpur MP, M. Sc. (Agriculture Economics and Farm Management), From Department of Agriculture and Natural Resource Management IGKVV Raipur CG. Since 2014, he has been working in the domain of crop insurance.



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