

Trip Report: Biophysical Baseline Surveys in the Western Ghats Sentinel Landscape (WGSL)

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RESEARCH PROGRAM ON Forests, Trees and Agroforestry

Four LDSF Sites to Survey in WGSL

Four-100 km² LDSF landscapes were selected by local partners within WGSL, based on an initial set of 14 sites representing areas with varying land cover trend trajectories, e.g., forested and forest-transition landscapes, including protected forest reserves and forest-agroforestry-annual crop mosaics (see Woody Cover Map below from ICRAF GeoScience Lab). The georeferenced biophysical data collected at these sites will be linked with the socio-economic surveys and the data collected with the IFRI instrument, in order to conduct innovative interdisciplinary analysis to assess drivers of forest change and its impact on land health.

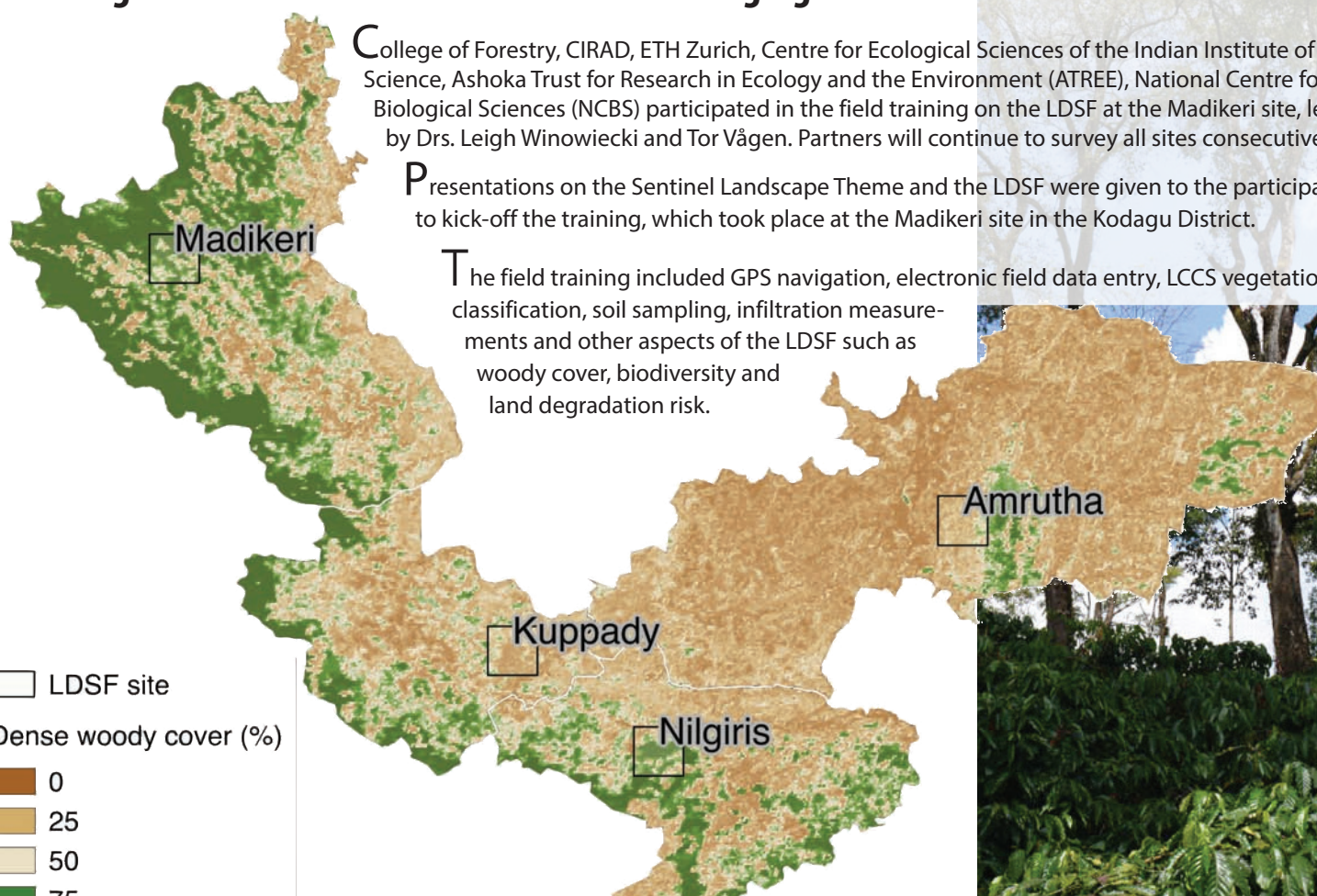
Important indicators that are measured as part of the biophysical field surveys include: woody cover, biodiversity of woody species, land use, and land use history, in addition to soil condition and erosion prevalence. Download the Land Degradation Surveillance Framework (LDSF) field guide here: <http://gsl.worldagroforestry.org/?q=content/land-degradation-surveillance-framework-ldsf>

Training National Partners on the LDSF - Encouraging International Collaboration

College of Forestry, CIRAD, ETH Zurich, Centre for Ecological Sciences of the Indian Institute of Science, Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE), National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) participated in the field training on the LDSF at the Madikeri site, led by Drs. Leigh Winowiecki and Tor Vågen. Partners will continue to survey all sites consecutively.

Presentations on the Sentinel Landscape Theme and the LDSF were given to the participants to kick-off the training, which took place at the Madikeri site in the Kodagu District.

The field training included GPS navigation, electronic field data entry, LCCS vegetation classification, soil sampling, infiltration measurements and other aspects of the LDSF such as woody cover, biodiversity and land degradation risk.



Cross-Landscape Analysis in FTA

Data collected in the systematic biophysical and socio-economic field surveys in the WGSL will feed into a global database for all the FTA Sentinel Landscapes. This will enable us to conduct cross-site comparisons of ecosystem health, tree cover and tree cover transitions.

Photo Right: Field training participants at the Madikeri landscape.

