

Topical Lunch Summary
Sustainability Research Opportunities in India
April 7, 2009

Attendees:

Helene Schember, hrs6
Ronnie Coffman, wrc2
Raman, K.V., kvr1
William Lesser, wh1
Frank DiSalvo, fjd3
Neema Kudva, nk78
Mark Milstein, mm462
Allison Jack, alh54
Farah Hussain
Sean Cogliardi, sc745
Daniel Roth (Host) dnr6

Goals: The lunch was organized around a powerpoint on collaborative research and learning opportunities with four specific potential collaborators in India. The primary goal was to communicate these opportunities to faculty and graduate students who are presently working with Indian partners or are interested in developing future partnerships. Organizations included:

- Tamil Nadu Agricultural University
<http://www.tnau.ac.in/college.html>
- The Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology
<http://www.navdanya.org/about/overview.htm>
- SEEDS
www.seedsindia.org
- Information Resources Management Association - India
<http://www.irma-international.org>

Topics: The powerpoint slides below cover the following topics:

- Sustainable Agriculture and Organic Training
- Post-Disaster Sustainable Development
- Information Technology and Rural Capacity Building
- Biofuels, Biomass, and Energy Systems
- Watershed Management and Bio-Remediation
- Development Policy Studies

Dialogue:

- Some concerns were raised over the accuracy of reports and efforts by The Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology. Emphasis that partnerships should be established with reputable and reliable organizations.

- Several faculty discussed how the Tata Foundations \$25 million gift to Cornell for an Initiative on Agriculture and Nutrition might be leveraged. Ongoing negotiations with the Tata Foundation made it difficult to develop a clear strategy forward during the lunch. Alice Pell was acknowledged as the lead for that effort and details would be available in the next few months.
- Cornell's strengths in Agriculture and rural development were discussed and the need to become more engaged in research on urban areas and new, emerging high density population centers. Issues such as buildings/infrastructure, water and sanitation, and disaster response were all brought up as possible areas for focus of future efforts.
- Water issues emerged as a critical topic that Cornell had current research capacity and was an important topic in both rural and urban contexts.