

Project Update: December 2009

Ecological constraints that limit population build up of *Saraca asoca* (EN) in its natural habitats are being studied besides recording demographic profile of the species. Since bark is used by Ayurvedic Pharma Industries with a reported trade of > 170 tons/yr, it exerts tremendous pressure on wild population. Besides, it has been observed that the ratio of fertile to non fertile flowers (rudimentary stigma) plays a critical role in overall seed set. This has been compounded by heavy predation of pods by langurs, monkeys and squirrels that severely affect the regeneration.

Mass propagation trials on prioritised species were conducted and saplings of species such as *S. asoca*, *Nothapodytes nimmoniana* (EN), *Salacia chinensis* and *Embelia basal* (VU) were raised in the nursery. Experimental plantation plots have been established in various agro-climatic zones involving farmers and self-help groups.

