



Editorial Introduction

Welcome to yet another issue of this journal. As indicated in the last issue we are carrying an article that analyzes the controversy over licensing of technology in agricultural biotechnology. This article by Kshitij Kumar Singh examines the root of the controversy and explores the interfaces between various laws and orders issued by the state government and the Central Government. It also suggests few policy options. While the policy options can be explored and FRAND licensing could be a solution, the problem can be solved only if systematic changes are brought in seed production, quality control and distribution. In some instances intellectual property rights is only a small portion of the problem, in some it exacerbates the problem. Incentivizing innovation and assuring affordable access is a question that needs to be addressed in many issues ranging from access to knowledge to access to seeds. While many solutions have been suggested, I think we need more solutions that favor a holistic approach that can result in a solution to various problem at different stages of the value chain.

In February 2016 in the context of FAO Conference on Agricultural Biotechnologies a special issue of this journal was launched. Reviewing the proceedings of the Conference and the various themes discussed T. P. Rajendran points out that responses to agricultural biotechnologies have not been uniform, nor have been the policies in different countries been. Thus the potential of the technology is realized when the institutional and policy frameworks are conducive for fuller realization of the benefits. Underscoring this, he calls for a relook at policy options and technological choices in agricultural biotechnology and highlights the importance of socio-economic assessment.

Given its huge potential, it will appear strange that application of biotechnology in forestry sector has been limited. The controversies over GM trees is one factor that has inhibited use of biotechnology in forestry. The article by Andrea Sonnino provides an extensive analysis of the utilization

of biotechnology in forestry sector and identifies promising technologies that are to be commercialized in the near future. He rightly points out that forestry sector gets less attention when compared to crops and domestic animals and within forestry sector less attention is paid to tropical trees than temperate forest trees. It is important that these gaps are rectified for better realization of the potential of the biotechnology in forestry sector.

Sacred Natural Sites (SNS) across India are more than sacred sites, they are important for biodiversity conservation and form part of the rich biocultural heritage of India. Taking Uttarakhand as a case study Yogesh Gokhale and Nazir Pala , analyze the ground level reality in these SNS and offer solutions for protection and management of SNS.

Besides these articles, this issue carries a book review that examines the achievements in crop biotechnology and the path ahead.

With this issue ABDR completes its 18th volume. For a journal like this to survive and flourish for about two decades is impossible without the support from various quarters, particularly RIS. I take this opportunity to thank Prof.Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General of RIS for his guidance and support. ABDR has benefitted much from the contributors from all parts of the world and we seek continued support from the contributors in the past and potential contributors. The peer reviewers have ensured that the quality of the articles published is of high standard and their comments, sometimes, incisive have been of great value to the contributors. The International Editorial Advisory Board has been a great source of support and I thank the members of the Board for the same. The publications unit in RIS ensures that the journal is published without any compromise in printing quality and I thank them for their contribution to the journal. Finally it is the readers who are the ultimate source of support and reason for publishing a journal. Thanks again readers for your continuous support.

As we enter a new year, we assure you that this journal will continue its tradition of publishing quality articles that contribute to the scholarship, debate and understanding of the socio-economic impacts of biotechnology, broadly defined.