



The Aravali is calling for saviours

Help **SAVE** the **BIODIVERSITY** **HOTSPOT** of the **SOUTHERN** **ARAVALIS!**

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Dear Nature Lovers, Students & Youth,

We all know we are in the midst of a climate crisis at this point of history. We also know that though our forefathers enjoyed a pleasant climate, you, the next generation, have been left with climatic chaos, soaring summer temperatures and a very uncertain future. We all are observing that the seasons are going extreme, each monsoon is bringing floods, each winter is bringing heavy snowfall. Scientists are predicting the worst even though they cannot truly anticipate what disasters will ensue without immediate action.

We cannot stop the melting of glaciers and the breaking of the ice shelves in our polar regions, but we can play a key role in our home ground to control the local climate. In Gujarat and Rajasthan we rely heavily on the perennial sources of water that flow above ground and underground from the Southern Aravali mountain ranges. These mountains also play a vital role in controlling the climate extremes with its green cover.

The Southern Aravalis are playing the role of a carbon sink, or a heat sponge, which regulates our seasons.

Precious Nature Lovers, the Southern Aravalis are going through a very difficult phase as the old growth trees and sacred grooves are in grave and immediate danger. Year after year in the beginning of summers, fires are being spread in these forests so later the land can be easily cleared to the ground. A greedy land mafia is misguiding vulnerable tribal villagers to burn the forest in order bring in urbanisation schemes and make quick money. They are playing with our collective future. They are snatching your right to enjoy clean air, plentiful water and a liveable climate!

We know you are a concerned young person and want to help, but may not know how? This is the perfect opportunity to make a difference.

To prevent the forest fires, maintain the dense green cover, and lay the foundation for long-term conservation, we need to do an awareness campaign coupled with strategic action. We at Yagna are working with the local community to organize this 10-day comprehensive conservation camp that brings together the local tribal community, the Forest Department, biodiversity experts and youth from all across India to take action to conserve this final green oasis as well as create a long-term strategy for protection. This campaign will take place in April – just before the forest fires begin.

The activities and outcomes will include:

- ✧ To tag the trees of the old growth forest in order to protect and conserve the region from deforestation
- ✧ To document local biodiversity, food tradition and traditional culture
- ✧ To design a policy that supports and partners the Forest Department and local tribal

community for the protection of wildlife and to prevent wildlife trade

- ✧ To raise awareness within the community of the importance of the extensive underground aquifer network and engage the local youth and students to ensure this hydrological network stays intact, stays alive and does not dry out. It is critical to ensure that perennial streams remain perennial and clean as well as to ensure that the web of microbial life thrives, which in exchange filter the water that maintains water tables in our urban world, the basis of all life.
- ✧ To open dialogue with and provide direction to individuals in the community who are misguided by the land mafia and thus motivated to burn the forest
- ✧ To engage local women on the issues of forest conservation and sustainable livelihoods
- ✧ To establish strategic foundation for future reforestation where trees have been lost
- ✧ To raise awareness by expert lectures on the need and methods of sustaining a vibrant rural economy in harmony with nature instead of allowing rampant urbanisation. A key reason for deforestation is the encroachment on forest land done by villagers after selling their land to urban investors.

Your PRESENCE, which will demonstrate to the Forest Department and the villagers that this FINAL GREEN ABODE is of CRITICAL IMPORTANCE, will make this campaign successful. Step Up for the Future. Take the challenge!

Come forward to help protect this pavitra van! Protect this final green, life-giving abode of the Southern Aravalis.

Yours Truly,

Mihir Bhardwaj | Ambavi Gram Panchayat

Sunil Dubey

