



## **Azim Premji University Colloquium Series**

presents a lecture on

### **Conservation, Crop-loss and Coffee: The Adverse Effects of Banning Customary Practices in an Indian Tiger Reserve**

Speaker

**Nitin D. Rai**

Fellow, ATREE, Bengaluru

**Date: November 12, 2015 (Thursday)**

**Time: 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm**

**Venue: 10<sup>th</sup> Floor Auditorium, Pixel A, Azim Premji University**

Watch the live broadcast of the talk by clicking <http://lectures.azimpremjiuniversity.edu.in/>. It can be accessed from Android and iOS devices too.

#### **About the Lecture**

The physical displacement of people is a direct outcome of protected area establishment. The impact of displacement on forest dwelling communities has been documented in some detail. What is less evident is that conservation policy has impacts on forest residents even when it does not involve physical displacement. We suggest that a web of interactions beginning with restrictions that were imposed as part of protected area practice has produced *in situ* displacement, where people are 'displaced socioeconomically but not spatially'. The banning of indigenous practices such as early season fires, hunting and collection of forest produce in the Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple Tiger Reserve has had a series of effects on not only the condition of the forest, but also on agricultural practice and household income. The lack of fires has resulted in the proliferation of the invasive species *Lantana camara*. The ban on hunting has increased the population of wild boars, which raid the rain-fed agricultural fields. As a consequence many Soliga adivasi households have switched to cultivating coffee, which wild boar do not consume. Wage labour in large coffee estates and agricultural plantations are now the primary source of income. Soligas, even as they are displaced *in situ*, are made available as labour to coffee estates and forest department work. Although proletarianisation of the Indian peasant is an ongoing phenomenon, we argue that conservation policy further exacerbates this process through appropriation of land and forests for conservation.

## About the Speaker

**Nitin D. Rai** is a Fellow at the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE). He uses a political ecology approach to understand the implications of conservation practice for people and landscapes. For the past decade he has partnered with Soliga adivasis to study the politics of conservation in the Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple Tiger Reserve. More recently he has been part of an interdisciplinary team analyzing transformations arising out of state efforts to sedentarise pastoralists, facilitate industrialization and encourage tourism in the Banni grasslands of Kutch district. Nitin is an editor of Conservation and Society and in 2014 was appointed a member of the International Union of Forest Research Organisation's global panel on forests and food security.