

BAMBOOS OF INDIA

a compendium



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FOREWORD

Bamboo is one of the most ubiquitous, multi-use plant species in the tropical and subtropical regions of the world. It prominently features in the everyday lives of people in many living cultures of ancient lineage, particularly so in Asia. With the plant finding many industrial applications as well (such as in the manufacture of paper and rayon), the pressure on this resource has increased many-fold.

Among Asian countries, India is second only to China in terms of the quantity and variety of bamboo species. However, a problem that India has in common with many other nations is the lack of adequate information on bamboo. This Old World grass is taxonomically difficult to classify and study, and the resultant confusion has come to stand in the way of sustainable management and utilization of bamboo.

Recognizing the immense socio-economic values of bamboo, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR), have been in the forefront of efforts aimed at a better understanding of bamboo taxa. Both organizations have chosen to work closely with national programs to build and enhance national research and development capacities.

The Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI) has been one of the collaborating institutions for several IDRC and INBAR projects on Indian bamboos and rattans. *Bamboos of India - a Compendium* is the fruit of one such project. This compendium by K. K. Seethalakshmi and M. S. Muktesh Kumar of KFRI is a fairly exhaustive account of Indian bamboos, and we hope, will form a solid foundation for further work on the subject.

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