On request of Dr. A P Singh - Addl. Principal Chief Conservation of Forests (APCCF), Govt. of Gujarat and as decided by NJB and JCI, Sri P. K Choudhury – Principal Technologist, NJB and Sri Sri Koushik Das – AMM, JCI visited Gandhinagar to give a presentation followed interactive discussion on uses of Jute Agro textiles (JAT) in Agri-Horticulture and Forestry on 13th and 14th October 2019. The scheduled programme of 15th Oct was preponed on 14th afternoon by the Forest Department on arrival of the visiting team at Gandhinagar.

Accordingly, in the office of Dr D K Sharma, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) the programme was held and was attended by the seven senior forest officers (List enclosed).

Initially a brief description on JAT, its effectiveness etc. were explained and the life sample along with relevant documents were shown to the forest officers. Thereafter a ppt presentation was given on JAT for use in Agri-Horticulture and Forestry with special emphasis on use of Jute Sleeves for raising sidling / sapling in the nurseries. The efficacy of jute sapling bag was highlighted in the presentation supported by illustrative document along with results. The presentation was appreciated by everyone present in the meeting.

During interactive discussions the following points were placed for clarification before the visiting team:

- if the cost of product could be reduced if order is placed for bulk quantity.
- whether the shape of bag can be changed from rectangular to circulars one like poly bag.
- If the jute sleeve can be treated for enhanced life.
- porosity of jute cloth can impair the performance as water will not be retained inside the bag.
- whether it is feasible if the dept purchase jute cloth from genuine source and convert it to sleeve employing the local people.

All the above queries / points raised were addressed both by Sri Koushik Das and PK Choudhury with technical justification as follows:-

- cost factor may be considered in consultation with manufacturers / suppliers for the order of bulk quantity.
- due to drapable characteristics of jute cloth the rectangular shape bag will take a circular shape when filled with soil.
- porosity of jute cloth will not impair its performance as the pores will allow passage of water slowly from the bag which is essential for healthy growth of sapling on the contrary stagnation of water will be detrimental to sapling. Moreover, jute being hydrophilic in nature it will absorb water from atmosphere, retain and release during dry spell to help growth of sapling.
- Rot resistant treatment for jute is possible but will unnecessarily incur more cost.
- The dept can do so but at the initial stage they should prefer to procure the material from a reliable source like JCI to get standard quality material.
The proposal was accepted by the department and greed to initially procure 10 to 15 thousand pieces of sapling bag from JCI.

Technical documents like, brochure on jute agrotextiles both in Hindi and English, manual, source & sample book, case studies, BIS standard on jute sapling bag, technical paper on the subject along with sample of jute sapling bags of different sizes as requested by the department was handed over for their study.

PHOTO GALLERY ON VIST TO FOREST DEPARTMENT, GUJRAT, FOR PRESENTATION JUTE AGROTEXTILES ON 14.10.2019 & 15.10.2019