Communities, Traditional farming and climate change: Challenges and Opportunities

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- Background of the agriculture in India (western Ghats/NE India & Western Himalayas)
- Traditional farming practices
- Challenges in the past ... practices evolved to cope
- Practices lost due to modern agriculture, subsidies, policies
- Climate change & Modern Vs. Traditional farming
- Local varieties ... capacity to absorb the shocks
- Integrated landscape approach and isolated farmland approach
- Role of indigenous knowledge in conservation agro biodiversity
- Agro biodiversity and adaptation to Climate change
- What we need to do?
- how to engage the stakeholders in revival of traditional farming as adaptation mechanism/strategy to sustain the farming.
- Eco agriculture..
- Constraints..
- New opportunities

AT AERF we work in three landscapes with different traditional farming systems. These are western Himalayan region, North eastern India and Western Ghats. In North east India we have conducted research on NRM among communities practicing extensive slash and Burn. In western ghats we studied a different less known form of shifting cultivation and role of agro biodiversity in conservation the mountains. The presentation will bring forth the
experiences from all these areas and examples where communities (both rural and indigenous) have unknowingly or deliberately taken care of vagaries of sudden changes in the climate. The traditional farming systems in all these areas used to address the issue of optimum land use, sustainability, food security and changing climatic conditions. However, the production performance of such farming systems was poor if measured using the modern high yielding, hi tech agriculture practices. With this limitation, these traditional systems could not survive through the global market forces. Now if we want to revive these farming systems as climate change adaptation strategy, we need to develop innovative market mechanisms to support such specific diverse production systems.