

Conservation of the endemic overexploited cycad, *Cycas circinalis* L., in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, South India

Three monthly report – III
Period February 2008-April 2008

The monthly monitoring of *Cycas circinalis* in Kotagiri and Nilambur areas came to an end as of February 2008 since we have 12 months of data. The populations in Sithukunni continue to be monitored by Priya during her monthly visits to the area. The data has all been formatted and is ready for analysis. Additional data on number of leaf scars in a 10inchX 10inch area in five different areas on each branch and we can make some guesses on the age and growth rate of individual in different locations.

The responses of *Cycas circinalis* to fire is something which we need to study for the future. We have observations of rapid growth after fire or as in the case of Nilambur area even higher regeneration after fire. The photographs were taken while on a survey in the Nilambur area and the fires were only a few days old. While the older leaves are singed the new flush comes on more vigorously (Plate1).

Plate 1- C.circinalis in flush after forest fires in Nilambur.



The Cycad corner has come up in the balcony of the bee museum and has posters and plants on display. Saplings in the nursery are also being sold from the nursery at the museum. The Cycad corner has scope for further development.

New sites were not visited in this quarter and we hope to complete that in the next quarter especially a visit to the Melkote Sanctuary in Karnataka.

We also wish to complete the survey of the Western Ghats and work on the analysis to prepare the final report.