

ILDC: REGIONAL DIALOGUE

Land Governance in a Changing Karnataka | Tentative Programme | August 21-22, 2026, Bengaluru.

DAY 1 — FRIDAY, 21 AUGUST

INAUGURAL SESSION 9:00 – 10:00 AM

Welcome & Introduction to the Regional Dialogue

Conversationists

M.S. Shivakumar/Bhargavi Rao

Guests:

Leo F. Saldanha · Fr Arun Luis S.J., Director, Ashirvad -

SESSION I 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

From Farmers to Landless: How Land Gets Taken? — Lessons from Karnataka

Conversationists

Dr. Manjunath, School of Natural Farming.

Moderator:

Dr. A. Narayana, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru.

— Coffee Break | 11:00 – 11:30 AM —

SESSION II 11:30 AM – 1:45 PM

11:30 – 12:30 PM

Two Rights, Two Roads: Recognition Denied, Land Diverted Session 2.1: Unfinished Agenda with regard to Protection and Recognition: Forest Rights under FRA 2006

Despite two decades since the enactment of the Forest Rights Act, 2006, the recognition and protection of individual and community forest rights remain incomplete. A significant number of claims continue to be unrecognised, delayed, or actively resisted by the forest bureaucracy, undermining the Act's legal intent.

Conversationist

Dr. Sidappa Setty, Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment, Bengaluru.

12:30 – 1:45 PM

Session 2.2: Land Diversion in the Name of Development - Solar Parks, IT Corridors, and Other Non-Farm Uses

Impact on Life, Livelihoods, and Land Quality

The conversion of farmland to non-farm uses — such as the solar park at Pavagada and IT/tech corridors (AI city in Bidathi) — is examined here through its impact on life, livelihoods, and land quality. Unlike outright forced acquisition, land alienation in these cases is negotiated through the language of promised development, jobs, and lease income — a framing that makes it harder to resist and easier to normalise.

Conversationists

Yathiraj (Pavagada/Tumkur), a land-leasing farmer representative from Tumkuru.

Prof. Loganandan, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Tumkuru.

Moderator

Bhargavi Rao

— 1:45 – 3:00 PM Lunch Break —

SESSION III 3:00 – 4:30 PM

Local Land Struggles in Karnataka: Between Denial and Land Grabs

Key Discussion Areas

This session looks at panchayat-level land governance in practice: how the 73rd Amendment's devolution of land powers actually plays out on the ground, Gram Sabhas' real role in commons decisions and land-use planning, village commons classification and encroachment, panchayat coordination with revenue/forest departments, livelihood dependence on commons, and women's Gram Sabha representation.

Conversationists

Neither City nor Forest: Land, Livelihoods and Local Governance in Ragihalli — Vishalakshi Padmanabhan, Buffalo Back

The Power of the Plow: Standing Tall Against Forcible Land Acquisition by

Ramesh, Farmers Movement, Chikkaballapura/Devanahalli — confirmed

Moderator: Jothiraj, REDS, Tumkuru.

SPECIAL GUEST LECTURE 5:30 – 7:30 PM

Whose City? Whose Land?

Urbanisation and the Right to a Dignified Life for City Dwellers and City Builders — by Dr. Kirti Shah, Architect and Founder of the Ahmedabad Study and Action Group (ASAG) and India Habitat Forum (INHAF).

Moderator: Prof. Vinod Vyasulu, Former Director & President, Centre for Budget and Policy Studies, Bengaluru.

DAY 2 — SATURDAY, 22 AUGUST

SESSION IV 9:30 – 10:45 AM (75 minutes)

Reflecting on Day One: A Participant-Led Discussion on Land Rights, Recognition and Exclusion

Participants begin by reflecting on Day One's discussions on dispossession, land diversion, continued denial of rights and people's struggles, including the plight of farmers and landless people in rural areas and the urban poor, identifying shared threads of recognition, exclusion and erosion across rural and urban Karnataka.

Participants will sequentially reflect on:

Session I: From Farmers to Landless — How Land Gets Taken?

Session II: Two Rights, Two Roads — Recognition Denied, Land Diverted

Session III: Local Land Struggles in Karnataka — Between Denial and Land Grabs

Evening Public Lecture: "Whose City? Whose Land?" — Dr. Kirti Shah

— COFFEE BREAK | 10:45 – 11:15 AM —

SESSION V 11:15 AM – 13:00 PM

Coastal and Aquatic Land, Livelihoods and Justice

Key Discussion Areas

This session will examine land and justice issues across coastal and aquatic commons — livelihood security, coastal commons, wetlands, and lakes and tanks — alongside fishers' rights, CRZ regulation compliance in practice, women's land rights, land acquisition in coastal areas, rehabilitation and compensation, and broader social justice perspectives shaping governance of coastal commons.

Conversationists

Prof. Ramchandra Bhat, Snehakunj Trust, Hoonavar.

Vidya Dinkar.

Representatives from Gamana Mahila Samuha/SIEDS — TBC

Moderator: Bharath Nataraj, IIHS

— 13:00 – 02:00 PM Lunch Break —

SESSION VI 02:00 – 04:00 PM

Cross Learning and Building a Collective Agenda

The concluding session will draw together the experiences, insights and concerns emerging from the two days of dialogue. Rapporteurs from the thematic sessions will briefly share key takeaways, followed by a facilitated discussion to identify common governance challenges and priorities across the different themes.

Participants will then collectively prioritise areas for action, including policy and legal reforms, institutional innovations, research and knowledge needs, and collaborative action at the ground level. The session will conclude by identifying the key elements of a Karnataka Land Governance Agenda and agreeing on a mechanism and timeline for taking the agenda forward.

Format

Rapporteur synthesis followed by facilitated participant discussion and collective prioritisation of recommendations.

Anchor

Bhargavi S. Rao