

Highrange Environmental Research Centre

Under the School, the University has established an outreach centre named High Range Environmental Research Centre (HERC), at Nedumkandam, Idukki District, Kerala, with an aim to extend its activities beyond the University campus - first of its kind in the University. The centre has taken up various projects pertaining to the resource conservation and environmental problems of Western Ghats. It has played a major role in the development of Environmental and Disaster Management Plans. National Vegetation Carbon Pool Assessment, Ecohydrological assessment of the montane cloud forests, microbial forest litter degradation, Earthworm diversity, dragon fly diversity, pteridophyte diversity assessment, tribal studies, pollution studies are some of the research areas.

The centre implements modern scientific knowledge and research expertise to develop strategies for the management and conservation of one of the most unique ecosystems present in the state. Areas vulnerable to natural hazards were identified in the high range region with the help of GIS division of the school and disaster management plans were submitted to various agencies. Environment quality assessment of the cardamom plantations and other agricultural fields of the region have been carried out by the centre. HERC focused on the documentation and conservation of indigenous knowledge of various tribal communities and support agencies for making sustainable livelihood plans for them.

Diversity and Habitat preference of odonates and pteridophyte diversity of Pambadumshola National Park were carried out by the centre. Ecohydrological assessment of Anamudi shola national park and Earvikulam shola national park is presently going on with the intention of creating an in depth understanding of the

harmony between hydrology and ecology of the montane forest grassland ecosystems.