

Evolve supports science education program in India to reduce human-elephant conflict

10 December 2015 –Evolve(SIX: EVE) has made a small donation to support the science education work and new field stations initiative of wildlife biologist and conservationist [Surendra Varma](#), a senior scientist at the [Asian Nature Conservation Foundation](#) (ANCF), which is based in Bangalore, India and headed by the well-known elephant ecologist, Prof. Raman Sukumar.

Varma focuses on what he calls the “Eight Cs”: Counting (elephant census), Classification (population demography), Conflict (human-elephant), Corridors (for elephant migration), Culling (anti-poaching), Captivity (reducing the captive elephant population), Capacity building, and Conservation.

His field work, public engagement and capacity building serves as the foundation for India’s official elephant population census. He has played a central role in identifying and creating migratory corridors for elephants in southern India, and developing evidence-based elephant anti-poaching efforts throughout India and Southeast Asia. His field work and educational workshops with stakeholders in Myanmar led to the creation of that country’s first elephant reserve.

He is a tireless educator. During the period from April 2014 through August 2015, alone, Varma conducted 18 workshops across India to educate and inform the public about elephant science and conservation. He is also a coalition builder. He once convinced forest department staff, farmers, volunteers and students to help examine and survey the 500 km of elephant-proof barriers that surround the Nagarahole Tiger Reserve, Madikere Wildlife Division, and Virajpet and Hunsur territorial forest divisions and neighboring villages in Kodagu district of Karnataka. He is particularly passionate about developing science-based educational programs to engage with forest department ground staff, farmers and children.

“School-age children of farmers affected by human-elephant conflict sometimes see elephants only as dangerous animals. This belief is based on the experience of seeing elephants damaging property or injuring friends, relatives, or neighbors,” Varma said. “If proper knowledge about this issue is explained to these young students their negative feelings regarding elephant conservation can be reduced.”

Varma is currently working to create two field stations in southern India, and a tailored science-education curriculum, that can serve as education hubs for visiting teachers and students from primary and secondary schools, as well as from universities.

“I want to create a science curriculum that is simplified and user-friendly for the public, and can help create awareness for people to participate in conservation measures,” Varma said. “Without the interaction or coordination between scientists, policy makers and the public, knowledge stagnates. When there is free flow of knowledge it can reach a wider audience and produce more results.”

This disbursement of sums is part of the program that Evolva established as part of its [commitment to the environment and the UN Convention on Biodiversity \(CBD\)](#). As part of our commitment to the environment and the CBD, [Evolva donates 1% of product-derived revenues to support the conservation of biodiversity and science education in developing countries](#). We recognise that at a small company 1% of revenues can be a small sum. But, it’s a start and it will get bigger in the years to come.

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About Evolva

Evolva is a pioneer and global leader in sustainable, fermentation-based approaches to ingredients for health, wellness and nutrition. Evolva’s products include stevia, resveratrol, vanillin, nootkatone and saffron. As well as developing its own proprietary ingredients, Evolva also deploys its technology for partners, providing them with a competitive edge and sharing in the returns they make. For more information see www.evolva.com. Questions about our fermentation approach? Have a look at [our video](#).

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