

PREFACE

Traditional knowledge (TK) refers to the knowledge, skills, and practises that are generated, acquired, maintained, and passed down from generation to generation within a community. It is a precious treasure that indigenous communities have gathered through observation of nature and interaction with the environment. India has a rich heritage and vibrant legacy of TK in diverse S&T domains, including mathematics, astronomy, metallurgy, agriculture, architecture, commerce, medicine, and ecology, amongst many more. Such knowledge and practices are either passed down orally from generation to generation or described in detail in ancient classical and other literature. The majority of our TK are invariably linked to human needs and nature, and are a means of subsistence for the relevant knowledge holders, and therefore are crucial to the nation's growth. Nevertheless, lack of appropriate documentation, misappropriation, globalization, lack of interest among the younger generation, lack of integration in modern education and uncritical adherence to western science have played a major role in rapidly undermining our traditional knowledge systems. Some of our TK have been scientifically validated for their relevance in today's context, but a substantial volume of such knowledge is still awaiting validation.

Lack of effective communication with society on our S&T achievements has also been a major hindrance for confidence building efforts among public. Documenting TK and disseminating it in an accessible fashion can assist in demystifying unsubstantiated claims based on traditional practices and also in preventing misinformation. Recognizing the need for effective communication of TK/practices and upon the clarion call of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and President of the CSIR, Shri Narendra Modi, CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Policy Research (CSIR-NIScPR), New Delhi has launched the nationwide initiative to communicate scientifically validated traditional knowledge to the society with the brand name #SVASTIK (Scientifically Validated Societal Traditional Knowledge) initiative. The SVASTIK initiative is just a small step towards a bigger cause of communication and dissemination of traditional knowledge and calls for more deliberations and efforts on TK to strengthen and mainstream it. In view of this, the International Conference on "Communication and Dissemination of Traditional Knowledge (CDTK-2023)", organised by CSIR-NIScPR played a catalyst towards bringing together international and national experts and researchers working in various S&T areas of traditional knowledge.

The Special Issue (SI) of the *Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge* on "Communication and Dissemination of Traditional Knowledge" is based on the presentations made in the International Conference on "Communication and Dissemination of Traditional Knowledge (CDTK-2023)" held during 14-15 February 2023 at NASC Complex, New Delhi. The conference was inaugurated by Dr N Kalaiselvi, DG, CSIR & Secretary, DSIR, Shri Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary, Ministry of Ayush, Govt. of India, and Prof Ranjana Aggarwal, Director, CSIR-NIScPR.

The conference themes included '*Global Trends in Traditional Knowledge Research*', '*Scientific Validation of Traditional Knowledge*', '*Scientifically Validated Traditional Approach for Health and Wellness*', '*Scholarly and Popular Communication in Traditional Knowledge*', '*Challenges in Traditional Knowledge Communication- Misinformation, Disinformation and Fake News*', '*Traditional Knowledge Research and Communication – The Road Ahead*' and '*Traditional Ecological Knowledge As A Tool For Scientific Resource Management and Sustainable Development*'. The conference presented a vibrant platform to young and senior researchers to showcase their research work in various areas of traditional knowledge.

We thank the authors for their submission and revision of the manuscript in a timely manner; and we also acknowledge the reviewers for sparing their valuable time in reviewing the manuscripts critically. Thanks are due to Prof Ranjana Aggarwal, Director, CSIR-NIScPR, New Delhi for the mentorship and guidance for timely publication of this special issue.

Editors

Dr Charu Lata

Dr Paramananda Barman

