

## Report – Treescapes 2026

Between the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 7<sup>th</sup> of February, two SLE recent graduates attended the international conference “**Treescapes 2026: 1<sup>st</sup> South Asian Agroforestry and Trees Outside Forests Congress**” in New Delhi, India. The two SLE alumni **Gustavo Partel** and **Yushu Soon**, with support from the SLE Förderverein, represented the Center for Rural Development (SLE) and the Joint International Research Project conducted by their team in Vietnam between June and December 2025, which addressed “**Farmer-led strategies for climate adaptation: co-developing agroforestry models in Thai Nguyen, Vietnam**”. The project was conducted in cooperation with the Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry (TUAF) and in consultation with ICRAF/World Agroforestry Vietnam and is the pilot for a long-term cooperation interest between SLE and the two Vietnamese partner organizations.

For the participants, this was a valuable experience to present the findings of their JIRP outside of the SLE context and engage in scientific diplomacy. The conference, hosted by CIFOR-ICRAF India and the Indian Center for Agricultural Research (ICAR), involved the thematic collaboration of Indian policymakers, non-governmental actors (The Nature Conservancy, etc.) and international cooperation (GIZ India). The SLE participants used the opportunity to offer an oral presentation related to their own work, but also promote the SLE postgraduate program, research and training activities. During the occasion, SLE publications were distributed to interested participants, followed up by networking conversations to identify possible future partnerships for international projects.

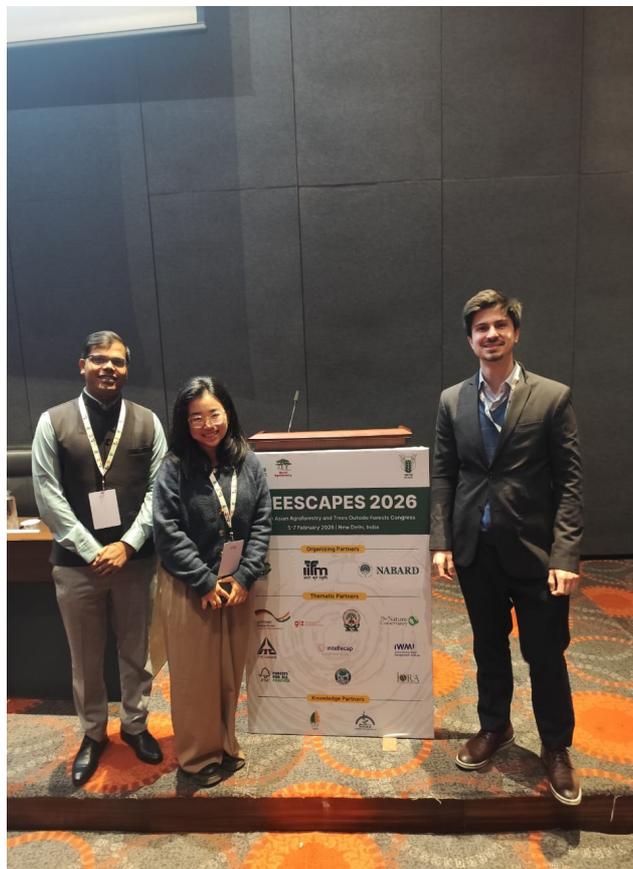
The input given by the SLE participants was placed under the Session “*Agroforestry/Trees Outside Forests for Climate Resilience and Enhanced Ecosystem Services*”, guided by a representative of GIZ India. The results presented to an external audience highlighted the critical nature of climate change in farmer livelihoods in Northern Vietnam and the role of agroforestry strategies for adaptation in the short and long term. Despite the focus of the conference in South Asia, the example from Southeast Asia connected with the overarching questions guiding inputs from panelists and other presenters, which revolved around identifying gaps and opportunities for the use of agroforestry to generate ecosystemic balance, climate resilience, and economic benefits for practitioners. The SLE presentation’s topic resonated with other thematic sessions of the conference, for example, concerning capacity building, extension and innovation for agroforestry and trees outside forests.

At an individual level, the participants gained relevant insights on the professional field of rural development from the perspective of research, policy, implementation, and financing. Contacts collected in individual conversations included professionals in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Kenya and Rwanda, a resource valuable for future job placement or in organizing cooperation agreements with the SLE and the Humboldt University of Berlin.

The Conference concluded with an official excursion with other delegates to Agra, home of the Taj Mahal monument. Besides the cultural experience, the SLE participants used the opportunity to deepen conversations with other professionals and researchers and exchange contact information for future collaboration.



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4



*Picture 5*