

Meet of the Mountain States VI

Agenda for a Sustainable Future

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INTEGRATED MOUNTAIN INITIATIVE

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Agenda for a Sustainable Future

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Executive Summary

The Integrated Mountain Initiative convened the Sixth edition of its annual Meet of the Mountain States (MoMS-VI) in New Delhi on 12 February 2018. The meet was organized at the WWF India Secretariat in Lodhi Estate. The Meet followed IMI's 6th Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (SMDS-VI) hosted by Mizoram Sustainable Development Foundation in Aizawl from 20-22 September 2017.

The three-day summit in Aizawl had deliberated on subjects of Climate Change and Sustainable Urbanisation in mountains. Various issues on these themes were discussed by climate scientists, climate change specialists, researchers and from across the country including speakers from within Mizoram itself. The Summit was divided into two main technical sessions along these themes with parallel sub sessions on research policy gaps, policy mechanisms for climate change and adaptation stories along with disaster risk resilience, waste and water management and infrastructure development. These technical sessions provided a platform to mountain states to exchange ideas, share knowledge and learn from success and failures of tried and tested models. With the vision of holistic and sustainable development, the aim was to draw upon scholarly inputs and meaningful experiences involving the leaders so that the summit resulted in actionable outcomes. MoMS VI served as platform to share these outcomes with the members of IMI community and particularly the policy makers and thought leaders from these domains.

MoMS VI was inaugurated by Shri Sanjeev Sanyal, Principal Economic Adviser, Ministry of Finance, Government of India who also released the proceedings of Sustainable Mountain Development Summit VI. In his address, he highlighted the need for local, organically developed plans for urban development in mountain cities for sustainable long-term solutions.

Considering the Sustainable Development Agenda which is the overarching framework for planning and implementing the development plans and the fact that India has committed to the Agenda 2030, aligning our plans to the Sustainable Development Goals has become a priority. It is even more important for the mountain states as they stand to gain much from such alignment. In this vein the, panel discussion focussed on how to integrate the SDGs into planning in the mountain states in India and what the key concerns in building the roadmap for the same will be. Key issues highlighted pertain to the governance and finance which are not very different from the issues that impeded the current progress of development plans. However, the SDGs need to be broken down to the concerned departments in the states as in the current scheme the SDGs appear to be

additional “work” for them where it seems that business as usual must also go on while adhering to the “new” SDGs. This work of orientation and capacity building is very important if we have to move forward with the SDGs henceforth.

Several eminent leaders of the development sector from organisations such as FAO (UN), UNDP, SDC, WWF, TERI and senior officials from ministries and government departments attended the meet and contributed to the discussion on different issues related to the sustainable development goals and sustainable urbanisation. The discussions in the Meet emphasized the need for stronger mountain partnerships and integration of sustainable development goals into mountain development. Issues regarding the ‘usual’ model of governance and how they pose an impediment to applying the SDGs in were also raised by many.

Similarly, the issues related to sustainable urbanisation of the mountain cities, their carrying capacities and their expansion as tourism, education centres were discussed at length and evoked strong responses from the audience as well. While sharing their experiences in addressing some of the concerns in this domain, the participants emphasised strongly on the fact that we still have some time to proactively curtail rampant advent of the unplanned urbanisation in many mountain states and IMI as a pan Himalayan forum must bring together the people build the thought and take action. In the months following the Meet, IMI along with Zero Waste Himalaya actively followed the issues of waste management in the mountain states and recognising the theme of World Environment Day (WED) 2018 to ‘Beat Plastic Pollution’, mobilised the stakeholders from the 12 mountain states to organise ‘The Himalayan Cleanup’ on 26 May 2018 which yielded data indications about the magnitude of plastic waste problem in the mountain states. This data was presented during the WED meet organised by MoEF&CC in New Delhi to policymakers and sustainable development organisations to general concern and call for action. IMI is now building focus on this major problem of waste management which impediments sustainable development efforts in the mountains in many unseen and unacknowledged ways.

Session I: Collaborative Mountain Development – 2017

Welcome address

Mr Ramesh Negi, Vice President, IMI



Mr Ramesh Negi, Vice President, IMI delivering the welcome address

Delivering the welcome address on behalf of IMI, Mr Ramesh Negi, Vice President, IMI extended warm welcome to chief guest to the Meet- Shri Sanjeev Sanyal, Principal Economic Adviser, Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India, Ms Marylaure Crettaz, Head, Swiss Cooperation Office & Counsellor, Mr Shyam Khadka, Representative, FAO India and all dignitaries in attendance. Speaking about sustainable development, Mr Negi cited an example of a small village Kalina near Manesar in Haryana which was struggling with water crisis but the farmers soon overcame the challenge by coming together as a community and drove drip irrigation system for wheat farming. Highlighting the challenges of working towards sustainable development collaboratively, Mr Negi pointed out that habitats all across mountains are facing some common challenges which must be combated with collaboration amongst not only mountain stakeholders but also by taking along the rest of the country. This is because if the mountain states suffer then the effects are felt in rest of the country. We must not overlook the fact that fate of rest of the country depends on the Indian Himalayan Region.

Mr Negi concluded this address by asserting that an effort has to be made at engaging lower and middle level bureaucracy to ensure that the vision and ideas from top can percolate to ground.

Dialogue: Mountain Cities - Disaster in the Making?

Session Chair: Shri Ravi Singh, Secretary General & CEO, WWF India

Panelists:

Dr Jyothi Parikh, Executive Director, Integrated Research and Action for Development (IRADe)

Shri Shakti Singh Choudhary, Hon'ble Mayor, Gangtok City, Sikkim

Dr Lalbiakmawia Ngente, Vice President, IMI

Shri Ravi Singh began the session by noting that the initiative taken up by IMI, to bring the mountain states together requires a lot of work. He applauded the effort by stating that such an alliance has led to a gathering with dynamism of thinking in areas which did not exist before. The has led to emergence of ideas and exchanging of views leading to better integration and network of people collaborating on distinct mountain issues. While it is very typical of the present times when because of resources and analysis, the intellectual capacity of the country's problems are known, equally the solutions are available as well. And going forward with the government the action plans drawn out are ready to be implemented. However, it would require someone to initiate the process.

The mountain cities are not a disaster in the making, but a disaster that is there. Taking the viewpoint of a naturalist, he stated that the issue of riparian or downstream communities hugely depends on the mountain ecosystems. In addition, mountain regions are seeing the multiple impacts of climate change. For example, Himachal Pradesh has had shortage of rains and has seen forest fires in this season. Should this be the new normal, and if so what needs to be done? He emphasized on simplicity in policy, planning and implementation as the solution. It will require strengthening of municipalities of mountain cities, improving governance, collection and recycling and reuse, introducing small policy and regulation changes on construction and reconstruction, and restoration of building year after year. These are some the issues that are interrelated and can be solved. Furthermore, he pointed out that we have the solutions, the laws and we have the coverage to take these forward.

He also, spoke on the importance of preserving the environment in the process of urbanizing. He stated that elements of heavy metal released downstream are preventing wildlife, fish and birds of prey from procreating. Researches have confirmed that birds of prey which are in the top of the food chain are not able to reproduce because their egg shells are too thin to combat the effect of DDT and other heavy metals. He shared that a large number of our best-known predators - the raptors and the vultures, are being affected by these environmentally toxic elements. This is a concern and it is not something that we have to wait to happen.

While on one hand we are seeing the impacts of environmental hazards, on the other there are natural disasters – earthquakes, mud flows, flash floods etc adding to the challenge of urban planning. Noting a few disasters that happened in the mountain states - Sikkim Earthquake and flash floods in Ladakh, he stated that people living in diverse ecosystems like mountain/cold deserts are completely unprepared for these kinds of disasters. The case of the Ladakh floods, the worst affected area being the Leh City, where the All India Radio building and the bus station located in Leh were washed away, shows how unprepared we are to new climatic extremes that are increasing as a result of climate change. The people, wildlife and the vegetation are not used to flooding. While it may not be possible to plan for uncertainties, what is possible needs to be done.



(L-R) Shri Ravi Singh, Dr Jyoti Parikh, Shri Shakti Singh Choudhary and Dr Lalbiakmawia Ngente on the panel on urbanisation and disaster management in mountain cities

Dr Lalbiakmawia Ngente reiterated Ravi Singh's statement that Mountain Cities are not a disaster in the making, but disaster waiting to erupt with time. He stated that cities like Shimla and Aizawl are unplanned leading to haphazard growth. One of the key issues he attributed to was big rural-urban migration seen happening everywhere in the northeast and in the mountain cities. For instance, in Mizoram, while there are 3-4 big cities, one third of the state's population is

concentrated in Aizawl; ie three and half lakhs out of the total eleven lakh population reside in this city. This has led to the capital city functioning beyond its carrying capacity. He noted that the need for proper policy, and institutional and legislative framework to help augment a comprehensive development plan. For this, environmental and disaster risk management which are still unaccounted for as far as a state like Mizoram is concerned needs to be considered. It also requires the involvement of the private sector in the process of framing policy mechanisms. Not only will it enable better participation in development planning, but also provide a sense of ownership, in areas where there are difficulties to implement the government policies.

Drawing upon his experience as part of the National Standing Committee on Housing about 25 years back, he stated that planning the one million housing scheme under the PM did not reflect the specific needs of the mountain states. This is still observed today when various government policies focus on the plains and the mainland, without reflecting the needs of the mountain states and cities. He emphasized the point that supporting development modifications of the national guidelines need to be amended accordingly.

Shri Shakti Singh Choudhary, Mayor of Gangtok City, shared that climate change has changed the pattern and frequency of rainfall in the state. He stated that in the past, the city used to experience rainfall for nine ten months a year. But over the past year, since November they have not received any significant rainfall. The shortage of rain has resulted in the increase of forest fires which are big challenge for the state as many hectares of forests get destroyed. He shared mentioned the importance of having strong support from the Chief Minister himself who has huge concern for the environment.

On the issue of urbanization in the mountain states, he stated that when officials at the centre plan for an urban space, big cities in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar were mainly considered. The Centre fail to consider mountain states like Sikkim. One of the key problems that neglected or missed out by urban planners for mountain cities like Gangtok is the failure to take into account the floating population. Due to the booming tourism industry, the state is expecting around twenty lakh tourists this year, adding multiple problems especially solid waste management, to the carrying capacity of the city. He also noted that in hill stations, heavy intensity rainfalls during monsoons coupled with unplanned waste collection and disposal systems could lead to landslides and flash floods. The tourism and waste management policies need to be reflected upon taking into account the impact of one over other. Lastly, he emphasized on the needs to strengthen ownership of development planning among the people as the government alone cannot do anything.

Dr Jyoti Parikh shared her work on the development of rapid vulnerability assessment during her tenure at the Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change. The objective of the task was to develop and assess vulnerable cities to natural hazards. For the mountain cities in the IHR, she mentioned that work was focused on cities namely Sri Nagar, Dehradun and Shillong. GIS based mapping was done to map watershed of the area was mapped and patterns of drainage patterns. She highlighted the importance of such mapping by taking the example of the 2014 Sri Nagar floods where the maps clearly showed the location of government offices on banks of Jhelum River led to the submergence of municipal offices. She mentioned that it was possible to track certain solutions of integrating technology in urban planning to enable adaptation to climate change.

Furthermore, she emphasized on the need for stronger engagement of different experts – academics, economists, geographers etc, with policymakers to discuss issues related to policy and practice for mountain cities. We should get the best practices to understand what makes it the best practice. Lastly, she called upon mountain cities from all across the world must come together and collaborate towards sharing their best practices, for example learnings from Switzerland, to solve some of the issues discussed.

Discussion

Ms Jyotsna Sitling, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, emphasized on the need for the government to focus on transient population in mountain cities and towns. While noting the floating population in mountain cities a cause of concern, she enquired if the government has policies and programmes in place to tackle the issue. She highlighted the need to include community-based institutions like Self Help Groups (SHGs) within the economic decision-making and devolution process.

She also stressed on the need to understand rural social architecture and its evolution while talking about migration in mountain states to make the discussions more balanced. Other key points highlighted were issues on gender and development; who now handles the mountain environment at that critical phase of the month. Is it the men or the women; involvement of women in businesses during periods when men have migrated from villages. She concluded by saying that these are issues that require immediate attention to strengthen social architecture while working on challenges of the mountain cities and towns.

Ms Urvana Menon, WWF India stated that it is high time to recognize and overtly start incorporating the values that ecosystems play in Disaster Risk Reduction). While globally, international agreements like the Global Sendai Framework for Action have done a great job of

articulating it in the best words possible there is clear disconnect between the centre and state in addressing the issue. She also pointed out the significance of maintaining healthy ecosystems to reduce the risks of disasters during the process of urban planning. Taking the example of the 2013 Uttarakhand flash floods, she highlighted the strong linkages between deforestation and impacts of disasters. She concluded by stating the need to take cognizance of the relation between ecosystems, DRR and urban planning.

Shri Sanjiv Nair, Former DG, NECTAR agreed to the pointed highlighted by the panelists and pointed out the need to address migration which is not only a problem of the mountain states but also the whole of India. He added that huge male migration taking place from the villages into the cities will lead to the whole agricultural basis going to the women. Additionally, he mentioned the need for surface and ground level data to provide a backbone to existing DRR frameworks. Since current data provided by the Survey of India is out-dated, it requires generation and updating new data base and further integration with surface models.

Dr Ashok Khosla, Vice Chancellor, Shoolini University shared that people have lost their love for mountain architecture and that mountain peoples have a lot to learn from mountain cities in the west. Countries like Switzerland have adapted new modern technology while maintaining old times.

Shri Ravi Singh concluded the session by stating that IMI's contribution in bringing together multiple stakeholders has brought in a more integrated approach to the process of policy making. There is a change that is happening in the sense that there is more devolution to the states. This devolution would mean a different kind of thinking, formulation and implementation of policies. Secondly, the on the idea of 'Mindset Change' brought up by one of the panelists, he stated that one of the states need to take the initiative on this.

Lastly, he spoke on the cultural framework of how cities in mountains should look like. One thing we must go back is that a large number of our cities may not be very large in size but not really cities in the whole sense. We don't have a cultural framework to go back to some of those. They were established the hill stations. These were actually discovered policies which were other than that of the sustainable Development. Since they are now the large frameworks for development, it is important that we go back to something that is culturally important to us today. It has that function leading to an understanding of what is going on in urbanization and migration. Hoping to the past is important when you can look at the Climate Change. Hoping into the future, based on where we are today, the voice of the present.

Proceedings of Sustainable Mountain Development Summit-VI, Aizawl

Dr Lalbiakmawia Ngente, Convener, SMDS- VI

Dr Ngente oriented the audience on the concept of Sustainable Development Summit VI which is organised by Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI) and hosted by one of the mountain states. The Sustainable Mountain Development Summit oscillates from the northern corner of the Indian Himalayan Region to the tip of the north east India. After the successful hosting of SMDS V at Leh Ladakh by the Ladakh Snow Leopard Foundation, the sixth edition of Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (SMDS VI) was held at the sprawling Mizoram University campus in Aizawl, Mizoram during 20th – 22nd September, 2017. It will now swing back to the northern region of the country, wherein Himachal Pradesh will host the next edition towards the end of this year.

The Mizoram Sustainable Development Foundation hosted the SMDS VI, which witnessed the participation of over 300 delegates from all over the country. The recent erratic rainfall patterns (and climate change), which exposed the vulnerability of the mountain cities, prompted the discussion at the summit to centre on the crucial themes of Climate Change and Sustainable Mountain Cities. The theme of Climate Change was further divided into three sub-themes: Research & Policy Gaps, State Action Plan on Climate Change and Adaptation Stories, while the theme of Sustainable Mountain Cities was also divided into the following sub-themes: Infrastructure Development, Water & Waste Management and Disaster Risk Reduction & Management.

Keynote Addresses of the two main themes were delivered by prominent experts who are the authorities on the subjects. Each breakout sessions had four selected paper presentations, wherein the discussions were very lively, informative and productive which reflected the rich regional diversity of the mountain regions of the country and their varied experiences of development at each and every level.

Three special parallel sessions were held during the summit. First and foremost was the Legislators' Meet which witnessed a galaxy of 31 legislators from eight states across the Indian Himalayan Region. They debated upon the Climate change and its impact on Indian mountain states, which culminated in the 'Aizawl Declaration'. The second special parallel session was the Policy Dialogue, on the draft 'National Policy for Indian Himalayan and Hill Regions in India', which was well-attended by the high-ranking officials of the Central Government, Government representatives from the state chapters of IMI, officials of the UN and other International agencies and participants of the summit. Last, but not the least was a special parallel session on Building Partnership for sustainable mountain development, which contextualized SMDS as a platform to re-look at what have been achieved thus far, evaluate problems and challenges of the mountain communities and

then move towards new ideas to find solutions by way of building partnerships across the mountain states of India.

During the summit, a plenary was devoted to Learning Session, wherein System Thinking and Landscape Governance were combined and touched upon by experts in the subjects. The other side events of the summit are Networking Bazaar and the 6th Indian Himalayan Photography Competition. Networking Bazaar brought the pan-Himalayan region NGOs, private or public organizations together to meet and network with each other, discover collaboration opportunities, as well as outreach to the general public about their work, services and programming. It also served an open forum for CBO's to share /seek information, best practices and open dialogues on various themes. The 6th Indian Himalayan Photography Competition was an opportunity wherein photographers showcased their pictures depicting the scenic as well as cultural richness and beauty



of the Himalayas.

SMDS VI Proceedings released by (L-R) Shri Sushil Ramola- President, IMI, Shri Ravi Singh, CEO & DG, WWF India and Shri Sanjiv Sanyal, Principal Economic Advisor to GoI

Another important event organized in connection with the summit was the Youth Summit, which preceded the main summit. Taking the agenda for youth and sustainable development forward and as it had been organized in the SMDS-III at Kohima, Nagaland, the SMDS VI at Aizawl was preceded by the Youth Summit where 62 youth from the ten states participated and shared their opinions and perspectives. The credit for successful hosting of the Youth Summit goes to LEAD India for their support and help. During the Youth Summit, the 1st Young Mountain Filmmakers Competition also took place, wherein the young filmmakers from mountain states showcased their work on critical mountain issues like conservation, climate change, sustainability, loss of cultural identity etc. All the participants from the Youth Summit participated in the inaugural session of the SMDS VI.

The SMDS VI was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Mizoram, Shri Lal Thanhawla, who emphasized the importance of such a forum to discuss how best to carry forward our sustainable development agenda which is so crucial for us. He also stressed on the importance to note the factor in environmental cost in the development process as we cannot compromise on the ecological balance.

The keynote address on Climate Change was delivered by Dr. Navroz Dubash of Centre for Policy Research; while the keynote address on Sustainable Mountain Cities was delivered by Prof. Anne Feenstra, architect from Netherlands. The special parallel session of Legislators' Meet was held at the Mizoram Assembly Secretariat, which was chaired by Shri Hiphei, the Hon'ble Speaker of Mizoram and co-chaired by Shri PD Rai, Hon'ble MP from Sikkim, who is also the Councilor of IMI. The special parallel session of Policy Dialogue was chaired by Dr. Amita Prasad, Additional Secretary, MoEF&CC and co-chaired by Shri Alemtemshi Jamir, IAS (Retd.), President, IMI & Former CS, Nagaland wherein the chairman explained in details the draft 'National Policy for Indian Himalayan and Hill Regions in India'. The third special parallel session dwelled upon building partnership for sustainable mountain development.

Another interesting event during the summit was the MDoNER-NEC-IMI PLENARY session, wherein the opportunity to welcome and interact with Shri. Jitendra Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of DONER came up. The session was chaired by Shri Alemtemshi Jamir, IAS (Retd.), President, IMI & Former CS, Nagaland. Shri. Jitendra Singh highlighted several steps taken to bring the Ministry closer to the people. He also informed the gatherings about the various inter-ministerial committees and state empowered committees formed to speed up funding for projects and urged the people to be aware of the various initiatives happening in different parts of the North East.

The valedictory session of the summit was graced by Lt. Gen. Nirbhay Sharma, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd), HE Governor of Mizoram who stressed that global warming, which is a live issue and affects the entire humanity and responsible for climate change world over, is one of the most

important global challenges affecting our ecosystems. He also stressed upon the the importance of sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem, the need to focus on disaster prevention and the need to study the adverse impact of climate change in all its dimensions and more importantly, discuss the strategies/action plan to mitigate such disaster and work towards capacity building.

In this session the Dr RS Tolia Award, which was instituted to keep Dr RS Tolia's memory and vision alive, was awarded to Ms. Rashmi Bharti for Avani and Dr. Lalbiakmawia Ngente formally handed over the SMDS baton to Dr. Tej Pratap, Councillor, IMI, who represented Himachal Pradesh, which will host the next edition of SMDS.

Dr Ngente pointed out that for a small state like Mizoram with very limited infrastructure, resources and various connectivity challenges, organizing such an event as SMDS was a gigantic task. He expressed his gratitude and gratefulness to the core team of MSDF and members of the Summit Organizing Committee who worked tirelessly to make the event a success. On behalf of the Mizoram Sustainable Development Foundation, he also acknowledged the untiring support of the State Government and various civil society organizations, the generous financial support of our partners and funding agencies, the guidance, support and encouragement of the Integrated Mountain Initiative and all the participants of the Summit. Last but not the least, he thanked the Almighty and said SMDS VI will have a fruitful and long-lasting impact to the people of the Indian Himalayan Region.

Chief Guest's Address

Shri Sanjeev Sanyal, Principal Economic Adviser, Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India



Shri Sanjeev Sanyal, Principal Economic Adviser, Govt. of India addressed the gathering

"We have to do something about our mountain cities, especially in the context that urbanization is happening. Urbanization is now almost like a fact of nature. We can't prevent it. Rather, we should be ready to manage it quickly. While it's generically true across cities in India, the mountain cities have a special problem. Urban issues is a state subject. But one of the curious things of post-independence urbanism is that, effectively, our urban codes flow from the central institutes and get replicated across states. This is the case, though it is not done under a constitutional or legal obligation.

Similarly, our architectural schools teach this way too. If we look at pre-independence architecture we find distinct features specific to states in their architecture- for example architecture and design of buildings at Kerala look clearly different from those in Rajasthan. Architecture reflects different cultures, climatic conditions and pluralistic

nature of India. I'm a member of the committee writing the new urban policy framework, which should be released this year. One of the intended objectives is to free states to think about their urban issues.

One of the philosophical principles of the committee is defined as 'Indian-ness' aimed at conserving Plurality. This is important from many perspectives: For civil engineering and development, say in Earthquake prone zones; for the existing and new inhabitants of a place to feel a sense of ownership to a place, architecture and design of public spaces have to be contextualized to the local surroundings; and to arrive at solutions to urban issues, contextualization is key. Twelve new urban planning centers are being opened up in IITs across India. This idea of contextualizing urban design has to be infused into these centers as well.

Let us now discuss some solutions that can be incorporated into Mountain city planning. During the roll-out of GST, based on the success of the GST Council there was an odd realization that different parts of the country can come and work together. In a similar way, the Mountain States need to collaborate both within themselves and with the downstream states. This will have direct linkages to creation of urban models specific to watershed areas and ecological spaces. It is also important to localize decision making. We must not expect the central Government to come up with a solution. Instead, the states should come up with a solution and the center will support and provide resources. Hence, it is of prime importance to shed top-down planning of urban infrastructure."

Collaborative Mountain Development- IMI Update

Ms Fantry Mein Jaswal, Secretary, IMI

Ms Jaswal presented an update on IMI's activities and efforts in the year 2017 towards furthering the collaborative mountain development with partners.

She shared the work on generating the 'State of Mountain Agriculture in IHR' being undertaken by IMI with Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), the thought behind and outcomes of the 'New Age Himalayan Farmers' Workshop: Perspectives and Experiences' while highlighting that for future of mountain agriculture, the push has to be on an Agriculture Policy for the mountain states. She spoke about the work being done for 'Understanding Mountain Peoples' Approach and Practices to Combating Climate Change in the Indian Himalayan Region' through a young researchers' forum under the National Mission on Himalayan Studies. For 'Strengthening Science, Policy and Practice Platform for Climate Change Adaptation in Indian Himalayan Region (IHR)', IMI is working with Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation India.

Ms Jaswal pointed out that going forward, IMI would be focussing on strengthening capacities in the mountains by engaging better, more rigorously with its state chapters, partners, mountain organisations and on sharing knowledge and experience for enabling action. At the same time, IMI will push the advocacy efforts by continuing to build the dialogue with policy and practice stakeholders in the region.

Strengthening Collaboration- Brief Comments from Project Partners

Mr Sushil Ramola, President, IMI

As the work in the mountains is complex. Our vision is making people of India proud of our mountains which is inclusive and also multi layered. It requires building partnerships on two layers- within mountain community, within the mountain people through IMI, state chapters, mountain institutions and with people represented from all levels- policymakers, academia, researchers, young people and grassroots organisation. At the same time, it is also important to build partnership with people and organisation from across the spectrum of stakeholder in mountain development- government, research organisations, civil society initiatives. As we all move forward, we don't need to reinvent the wheel but combine together our strengths and complement each other's work.

Ms Marylaure Crettaz, Head, Swiss Cooperation Office & Counsellor

SDC shares IMI's sentiment of making people proud of mountains because mountains are fragile ecosystems facing multiple challenges of water, disaster prone and now climate change spill overs. We also share IMI's multiple stakeholders approach. We are working directly through IHCAP on

climate change issues in the Indian Himalayan Region. Now SDC has a role in India on capacity building, technical assistance which will hopefully translate into concrete steps. We are still in an abstract world. How do we convert science-based evidence into policy? We need to think about how we use our partnership to support key action to take place. We support Uttarakhand and Sikkim through projects and Swiss expertise on specialised topics like forest management, water, disaster risk reduction. At the end of the journey what we need to have is good vulnerability and risk assessment, good projects to address them and financing the interventions. SDC is also working on climate resilient urbanisation. From our perspective, partnerships are a way of working and achieving and overcoming challenges, achieving concrete results together. A lot of partners are doing similar work on common issues, which is why coordination is very important and which is where IMI can play a key role.



(L-R) Mr Sushil Ramola, Mr Shyam Khadka, Ms Marylaure Crettaz, Ms Lianchawii, Ms Suruchi Bhadwal

Mr Shyam Khadka, Country Representative, FAO, India

Very briefly we have to define which partners and for what. Mountains remain the poorest regions in the world. Mountain economy is in a difficult position at the moment. What happens when

poverty becomes deeply rooted is environmental degradation. There is a nexus between poverty and environmental degradation. Poverty leads to deterioration of environment which leads to further poverty. It becomes a vicious circle. This can be observed in Indian mountain today.

One thing we must understand is degradation of natural resources in mountains is not limited to that brought upon by only mountain people. It also includes people from plain. This is contradiction. Second issue is that when green revolution began, it began as biological revolution but soon the biological revolution was overtaken by chemistry-based revolution. The impacts are being felt today and we are realising we need to bring about some balance to it today. These phenomena have contributed to the complicating and deepening the problems of mountain areas. So, we need to focus on making policymakers realise the kind of problems mountain areas face because of the impact of policies being applied without any context of mountain conditions. Given these situations, the partnerships have become so much more important. To run positive programs and to make the policy makers aware of the unique mountain problems. Another aspect of climate change that we need to prioritise with policymakers is the major factor affecting agriculture- soil quality, temperature and rainfall. As global warming deepens, in theory we would move up to higher altitudes in the mountain areas but that does not function like this. Other factors count in- soil quality in the higher altitudes for example will not be the same and we will be losing the grazing area, meadows. Thus, climate change will hamper mountain agriculture more severely than those of plains. We need to make relevant stakeholders aware of that. Mountain agriculture is not about chemistry. It is about biological evolution. In future, agriculture will be knowledge intensive and as such mountain farmers will be ahead of everyone as they have deep indigenous and traditional knowledge. So in our partnership with IMI, we are documenting the state of mountain agriculture through a project. We need to build partnerships with each other along those thoughts.

Ms Lianchawii, Programme Analyst, UNDP

UNDP is building partnerships with mountain states on natural resources management and environment. In the past few years north east Indian and other mountain states have become a major focus for the UN and we are strengthening our interventions in this region. UN joint initiative of three UN agencies is underway for strengthening the ecosystem-based livelihood in Mizoram. In Tripura UN is working on sustainable housing. We are helping in effective implementation of State Action Plan on Climate Change in these states including Sikkim. We are supporting training and capacity building of training institutes like ATIs, SIRTs under the National Mission on Himalayan Studies (NMHS) focussing on sustainable livelihoods, climate change, climate resilience and sustainable natural resource management. We have completed a project in three districts of Nagaland focussing on shifting agriculture and land degradation. In Manipur we are working on

climate change mitigation. Going forward, strategic partnerships will not just be in project or UN's role limited to a funding agency, but they will be based on UN's learnings, best practices from these ongoing interventions to build further and influence policies. Advocacy from these learnings have to be effectively build upon because within UN also, many different agencies are doing a lot of work which must be streamlined and aligned. There is a north east region group headed by FAO within UN. IMI can serve as an advocacy platform in the region to disseminate and collaborate on the basis of learnings from these projects and programmes and build them into relevant policy measures in the region. Key learnings and observations for us has been that the strength and role of traditional institutions in the region is important and critical for success of any interventions. Secondly the USP of the region is agriculture and horticulture which we must collectively work on. In this regard we have to do something about the connectivity issue which hampers the successful creation of value chains. Thirdly we must work with the youth in the region which is coming up to be our richest resources. We have to leverage this resource for the development of the region. All of us look forward to more collaborative and strategic partnerships in this direction.

Ms Suruchi Bhadwal, Senior Fellow, Earth Science and Climate Change, TERI

TERI is working on climate change impact, vulnerability, mitigation and adaptation. We are working with IMI, IDRC, DFID on all these issues. Partnerships are critical in building upon the research that we conduct because a lot of what needs to be done has to be done locally. This is not possible without partnering with individuals and institutions which can contribute and make the 'bottom-up' approach a practical reality. We need to share the research that is being conducted with local partners, stakeholders to come up with solutions that are localised and implemented effectively. In the Himalayan region, the lack of data to prove some of the changes or the direction in which these changes are taking place is of utmost importance. So generating data for changes that are taking place has been starting point for our work in the mountain states. Continuing this, to understand the nature of changes taking place in the mountain ecosystems, we ended up setting observatories for our research on glacial health and automated weather stations to be able to create data, densify the information to be able to prove the nature of climate change impacts for action that can be taken for effective adaptation. In Sikkim we are focussing on Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) and agro-economy. In Uttarakhand we are focussing on extremities- the factors, planning and adaptation. Second issue is water and spring shed management.

TERI follows the 'bottom-up' approach and has engaged in extensive consultations with stakeholders to understand the issues concerning state, district authorities, communities to come up with holistic solutions that address the cross sectoral problems. All these activities and approach require working with partners at all levels.

Session II: Sustainable Development Goals: Roadmap for IHR States

Session Chair: Shri PD Rai, Member of Parliament & Councillor, IMI

Panelists:

Yamini Aiyer, President and Chief Executive, Centre for Policy Research

Sushil Ramola, President, IMI

M R Madhavan, President, PRS Legislative Research

The discussion in this session focussed on how to embed SDGs into the state planning for mountain states in the IHR. The panel agreed that mountain states face a huge challenge. Sustainability needs to be thought out from a more holistic perspective and forums like IMI are absolutely critical to guide and exchange that thinking. The SDG roadmap needs to be embedded in the vision of what society needs to look like. Key themes that emerged from the discussion are – financing the SDGs implementation and governance issues involved.



(L-R) Chair for the session on SDGs and Himalayan States- Shri PD Rai with panellists Ms Yamini Aiyer, Mr MR Madhavan and Mr Sushil Ramola

Finance and SDGs

Ms Aiyer mentioned that state budgets are highly opaque. If gram panchayats need to contribute to achievement of SDGs, the budgets need to provide at the granular level what money the panchayats are allocated. Technology can give us simple solutions. Monitoring and accounting systems are also archaic. The first step is transparency. For instance, just like Sikkim, budgets should be put up on excel online.

Mr Madhavan pointed out that money is being spent at all levels by all governments. We need more systematic spending and tracking of budgets to be able to achieve the development agenda. He shared an example that cess is a form of revenue that typically says that 'The government will not spend from its revenue on the particular matter'. Cess' have significantly increased over the last 3 years. Government should increase taxes if more revenue is required to meet the development agenda but do not increase or impose cess.

Governance and SDGs

The session brought up the issue of governance issues in general and their implications for SDGs' implementation in the current framework for implementing any development plans.

Ms Aiyer focused on aspects of implementation of SDGs in the mountain region. SDGs are all encompassing best practices. India can learn from its mountain states. Challenges of implementation exist in India. One aspect of mountain states that can be focused on is its rural local governments. SDGs fall firmly in the domain of local governments. The role of local governments need to be strengthened. Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim are one of the most path breaking states in the role of Panchayats in implementation of various schemes at the base of the pyramid. Sanitation is a huge example. Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim spearheaded sanitation much before Swachh Bharat. Learnings from the mountain states are critical to understand how to allocate funds and functions at the local governance level.

We also need to be aware that there is a lot of governance innovation in mountain state. We need to ensure exchange and cross learning between and across states. For instance, in Meghalaya- social audit and grievance redressal law has been studied to learn about how this needs to be done. A lot of pioneering work is happening in the mountains and needs to be used to achieve sustainable development goals in the future. She also pointed out that terrain issues play a role in achievement of development goals. Therefore, interchange and exchange of ideas from mountain states and within mountain states is important. Women participation in hill states is very strong and collective organization needs to be tapped into to scaling up of programs.

Mr Madhavan stated one of the big questions that need to be answered is not just about implementation of SDGs but about sustaining it. When the Well-Being of Generations Bill was being drafted for Sikkim a number of public consultations were held which helped build consensus and ownership and therefore, a law is likely to be sustainable. The second thing that a law does is that it is a commitment of the state. For instance- MGNREGA continues after change of governments.

Another issue that needs focus is there is very little discussion at the legislative level on important issues such as climate change. Direct social impact related issues such as education, health are being discussed every day. Floods and landslides discussed only when they occur. Also the linkages to broader global agenda does not exist.

As per data, the Speaker committed to one discussion on SDGs in Parliament. SDGs have been discussed only thrice since Monsoon Session of 2015. However, not much has happened. State Assemblies have even lesser discussion.

Integration

Mr Suhsila Ramola shared that IMI plays the role of an integrator just as SDGs play the role of integrator as all goals are inter linked. To build a roadmap, we need to break out from the silos and work in coordination. For instance, budgets are worked out for departments. Whereas if we are to really pursue SDGs, the budgets need to be outcome oriented and departments need to work together.

As a pan Himalayan platform, IMI needs to build awareness and capacities of the people to achieve the SDGs. Currently, IMI is engaged in a project to collate and disperse practices of climate change adaptation and mitigation across the Himalayan states. 11 young researchers are working on this project under NMHS. We need to undertake more such initiatives to ensure the sustainability and integration of mountain issues the mountains.

Concluding Remarks: PD Rai

The discussion threw light on the current set of issues that SDGs is mired in. Meet of the Mountain States is a microcosm of the Himalayan states and this platform has enabled the audience to understand the framework and interlinkages of SDGs well. We now know how closely Climate Change is related to SDG and similarly other goals are related to each other.

It is clear that more needs to be done at the lowest levels of governance- the panchayats- to ensure that SDGs are achieved. We need to engage with SDGs at a personal level and understand which particular goal our action is impacting. This will enable the movement from person to family to community and the larger ecosystem. Sustainable and sustained discussions on the subject will take

place. Currently, the Speaker's Initiative in Parliament is trying to engage more and more legislators to participate in discussions and therefore, more and more Member of Parliaments are aware of the challenge at hand.

An Act like the Well-Being of Generations Bill in Sikkim is only a first step. The real challenge is implementation and each one of us needs to contribute positively to this agenda.



(L-R) Chair Shri PD Rai with panellists Ms Yamini Aiyer, Mr MR Madhavan and Mr Sushil Ramola

Concluding Session

Concluding Remarks

Dr Rajendra Dobhal, Director General, Uttarakhand State Council for Science and Technology & Councillor, IMI

Our key theme for discussion on urbanisation is very well placed both in terms of its relevance and the critical timing. We have been talking about the importance of the traditional methods of building and traditional architecture but the harsh reality is that it has become extremely expensive to maintain traditional building methods with traditional materials. Second issue highlighted often is migration. We think that out migration is because of poor economy but even as economic gains to people within state improve, people migrate out because the basic issue is of lack of basic development infrastructure and facilities. Also, sometimes we neglect migration from rural areas to semi-urban and urban towns in the mountains. This kind of migration must be regulated through legislative measures before it is too late.

We all know Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have become the new planning framework. However, within the state governments, they are not considered important or there is no awareness about them. Planning for SDGs is very low priority for state departments. Whenever there are efforts to mainstream the SDGs, departments complain about lack of separate funding which is not possible. Another issue with this is that there is no component of capacity building for mainstreaming the SDGs in state and departmental planning. Discussion today also highlighted how governance issues affect the integration of SDGs. Our experience has been that on issues of climate change, SDGs, governance there is not only official hierarchy but also political hierarchy. There are a lot of gaps between the governance must have and the de facto governance.

We have varying reports about the soil fertility and nutritional value of our food grains in the plains. Soil fertility in mountains is still intact and we are fortunate. However, we are struggling with water scarcity. We are rapidly losing our water sources, facing erratic rainfall patterns. There are no success stories for water recharge in any of the mountain states and scientific community is not heading anywhere on this account.

While thinking about the sustainable urbanisation of mountain cities, we must also think about the carrying capacities of these cities especially when we are constantly coming up with plans to open new colleges and universities in these cities. We do not take into account the sudden influx of students into the city because of education institutions and the pressure it is going to create on the mountain cities. This is one aspect that we need to take care of and not make development plans in a hurry without stringently thinking them through.

Ms Jyotsna Sitling, Jt. Secretary, Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Skill Development

After today's deliberations on disaster risk resilience, sustainable urbanisation I feel it is important that we must focus on one particular sector and try to build policies, infrastructure around that with real, active participation from community and especially youth. This possible for livelihood as people's aspirations are tied in very practical terms to it. NITI Aayog has taken cognizance of the people's aspirations and constituted 6 working groups focussing on different

In terms of doing something concrete, sustainable mountain tourism is one sector where we can do a lot of work with some innovations. We have done a lot of skill analysis and tourism has come up as one sector where there is a growing trend and the youth also aspires to be engaged in it. From mountain context we can take up value chain analysis, take up production services while addressing the gender issues and engaging youth. Only if we align our efforts with aspirations of the mountain people and then build something which also is aspirational, can we actually do something real and practical. So, livelihood is one sector where we can make everything come together to benefit the mountain people. It's very important for us to pay attention to livelihood aspect and make mountains aspirational for people especially the youth. IMI envisions to make the people of India proud of our mountains which will happen only if there is livelihood security for mountain people within the mountains.

Summarization and President's Remarks

Mr Sushil Ramola, President, IMI

The day has seen very rich and elaborate discussions covering a lot of ground. The challenge for us is how do we focus on distance between policy and practice, how to connect people through awareness building, through policy dialogue, through capacity building- how do we connect people in this task. This is the issue we are going to take with us and discuss amongst ourselves and outside of IMI.

Vote of Thanks

Ms Priyadarshinee Shrestha, Jt. Secretary, IMI

On behalf of IMI, Ms Priyadarshinee Shrestha presented the vote of thanks to the distinguished representatives from government departments and development agencies, members of IMI and the organising team in the IMI secretariat. IMI is an idea and a movement which is as strong as the partners working with it. We are grateful to Mr Shyam Khadka, FAO country representative, Ms Marylaure Crettaz, Head, Swiss Cooperation Office, Ms Susurchi Bhadwal from TERI and Ms Lianchawii from UNDP. We thank our panellists- Shri Shakti Singh Chaudhury, Ms Yamini Aiyer, Dr Jyoti Parikh. She extended IMI's gratitude to Mr Ravi Singh, for WWF India's unwavering support for

IMI's activities. She congratulated all those present for successful deliberations, expressing that IMI hopes to build action based on the inputs provided by the participants and work jointly with them.

Annexure 1: Programme Schedule

Meet of the Mountain States VI

Agenda for a Sustainable Future

Programme Schedule

Date: 12 February 2018

Venue: WWF India Auditorium, 172 B, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi – 110 003

09:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Registration
Session I: Collaborative Mountain Development 2017 (10.00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)	
10:00 – 10:05	Welcome address: Mr Ramesh Negi, Vice President, IMI
10:05 – 10:10	Release of SMDS-VI Proceedings by Chief Guest Shri Sanjeev Sanyal, Principal Economic Adviser, Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India
10:10 – 10:50	Dialogue: Mountain Cities - Disaster in the Making? Session Chair: Shri Ravi Singh, Secretary General & CEO, WWF India
10:50 – 11:00	Address by Chief Guest
11:00 – 11:20	Tea Break
11:20 – 11:30	Proceedings of Sustainable Mountain Development Summit-VI, Aizawl: Dr Lalbiak Mawia Ngente, Convener, SMDS- VI
11:30 – 11:40	Collaborative Mountain Development- IMI Update: Ms Fantry Mein Jaswal, Secretary, IMI
11:40 – 11:55	Strengthening Collaboration- Brief Comments from Project Partners Ms Marylaure Crettaz, Head, Swiss Cooperation Office & Counsellor Mr Shyam Khadka, Representative, FAO India Ms Suruchi Bhadwal, Senior Fellow, TERI Ms Lianchawii, Programme Analyst, UNDP
11:55 – 12:00	Vote of Thanks:
Session II: Sustainable Development Goals: Roadmap for IHR States (12:00 – 01:00 p.m.) Session Chair: Shri PD Raj, Member of Parliament & Councillor, IMI	
12:00 – 12:10	Chair's Remarks
12:10 – 12:50	Panel Discussion
12:50 – 01:00	Q&A
Concluding Session (01:00 – 01:30 p.m.)	
01:00 – 01:15	Concluding Remarks: Dr R. Dobhal and Dr Vincent Darlong, Councillor, IMI
01:15 – 01:25	Summarization and President's Remarks: Mr Sushil Ramola, President, IMI
01:25 – 01:30	Vote of Thanks: Ms Priyadarshinee Shrestha, Jt. Secretary, IMI
01:30 p.m. – 02:30 p.m.	Lunch

Annexure III: List of Abbreviations

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
IHCAP	Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme
IHR	Indian Himalayan Region
IIT	Indian Institute of Technology
IRADe	Integrated Research for Action and Development
MoEF&CC	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
MoMS	Meet of the Mountain States
MSDE	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
MSDF	Mizoram Sustainable Development Foundation
NECTAR	North East Centre for Technology Application and Research
NEHU	North Eastern Hill University
NESAC	North Eastern Space Applications Centre
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SMDS	Sustainable Mountain Development Summit
TERI	The Energy & Resources Institute
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UCOST	Uttarakhand State Council for Science and Technology
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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