

MOUNTAINS CONNECT

AGRO-ECOLOGY, CLIMATE RESILIENT FARMING AND LIVELIHOOD ENHANCEMENT IN BORDER

MARCH 2025

IMI is implementing the project "Agroecology, Climate Resilient Farming, and Livelihood Enhancement in Border Villages of the Indian Himalayan Region," wherein in-depth study of the state of agroecology in selected areas of the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) will be conducted. The project is led by Dr. GS Rawat as Advisor, Ms. Binita Shah as Principal Investigator (PI), with Dr. Dr. Rajan Kumar Kotru (Co-PI, Himachal Pradesh) and Shri R.P. Gurung (Co-PI, Sikkim). The three border districts in the IHR are Spiti Valley, Himachal Pradesh, Niti Valley, Uttarakhand and Dzongu Valley, Sikkim. In each valley a few border villages, identified for overall development as vibrant villages by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India have been selected in consultation with the state governments.

Rationale: Developing traditional & threatened Himalayan Agro ecology into commercial application thereby enhancing livelihood opportunities for communities.

Novelty of the study: These villages as well as the many of the crops have not yet been mainstreamed into the value chain. Communities are not aware of the high nutraceutical properties of the crops. The novelty lies in product value addition, outreach in the region, and the capacity building of the community where there has been very little outreach even from the government and civil society due to the sheer location of the project area.



Orientation program, Dehradun

EXPECTED RESULTS:

- Capacity building of farmers.
- Towards awareness and knowledge enhancement on the nutraceutical and economic value of the traditional agro-ecology being practiced.
- Improved production practices for the crops for high quality and higher production.
- Seed production and certification and labelling as well as marketing.
- Institution building and management of Community-based Organization.
- Marketing skills.
- Processing skills, use of machinery and other modern technology

Field Visits



PROJECT PARTNERS:

- Uttarakhand State Council of Science & Technology (UCOST)
- Government of Uttarakhand
- Government of Himachal Pradesh
- Government of Sikkim

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

This winter witnessed high temperature and low snow or rainfall in Indian Himalayan Region resulting in forest fires and risk to horticulture crops. The water scarcity looms large in coming summer months as well as reduction in power generation in Hydro projects. The danger of climate change is more unless long term adaptation strategies are adopted in IHR. The basin approach shall have to be adopted to face all these issues including the water borne disasters.

All IHR states should join hands to insist on Union Government to devise pan Himalayan strategies with authentic research methodologies based upon ground realities. The Carrying capacity studies for Himalayan towns with uncontrolled tourism resulting in acute water shortages for local citizens and mounds of plastic waste need to be commissioned.

IMI had been raising these issues with 16th Finance Commission visit to states. In December, IMI through Uttarakhand chapter had consultations with State Advisor on Finance Commission to highlight these issues with 16th FC . Let's hope Himalayan peoples woes are understood by rest of the country and we are together able to secure environmental safe Himalayas and provide ecological services to downstream populations.

Ramesh Negi
President, IMI



Women of Niti valley were in an exposure visit to Dehradun and were invited to Thaur for a meeting , 10 members participated. Had Focus Group Discussion and made plans for the next steps.

Shri Debashis Chakraborty

is retired Chief Conservator of Forests from Tripura and associated with Tripura Chapter of IMI named Development Initiative for Sustainable Advancement (DISA).

IMI Association

Associated since 2015 when Dr V.K. Bahuguna PCCF and Principal Secretary desired to open a State Chapter of IMI. Presently he is functioning as the president of Tripura Chapter.

Current Affiliation

Presently Chairman of Bharatiye Vidya Bhavan Agartala Kendra in the management of 2 B.Ed colleges, 1 college of Science and Technology and 1 senior secondary school.

Challenges

As in all mountain areas, unsustainable management of resources.

Future Plans

The mountain states and Himalayas are the sources of clean ecology whose benefits are available to plain areas and so proper allocation of funds and skilled projects to be sanctioned for mountain states in return of the ecological services given to plain areas, that will enhance the value of mountain states. IMI has been trying to establish such ideas and opportunities. IMI to be properly involved in Budget making and preparation of special packages for mountain states.



State Consultation Workshop on Macro Level Stocktake Assessment on solid waste management and promoting a circular economy in the State of Uttarakhand

The state consultation workshop titled "Macro Level Stocktake Assessment on Solid Waste Management and Promoting a Circular Economy in the State of Uttarakhand" was held on December 12th, 2024, at the Swami Nityanand Auditorium Building, Doon University, Dehradun. Jointly organized by the Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI), ICIMOD, Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand (SDFU), and the Doon University, the workshop aimed to assess the current state of solid waste management (SWM) in Uttarakhand and explore strategies to integrate circular economy principles into waste management practices. Discussions during the event included policy frameworks, technological advancements, community engagement, and sustainable business models. The objectives of the workshop were multifaceted. A macro-level stocktake assessment was conducted to develop a comprehensive understanding of solid waste management across all nodes of the value chain. [Read here](#)



Parvat Manthan- highlighting issues of the Himalaya. New Delhi 3rd and 4th December 2024...

Parvat Manthan saw delegates from Bhutan, India and Nepal in a Dialogue for Enhanced Service Delivery in Water, Used Water and Waste Management for Hill Cities on 3 and 4 December 2024, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The dialogue was hosted by National Institute of Urban Affairs, Integrated Mountain Initiative, ICIMOD and BORDA focused on enabling equitable sanitation services and implementing decentralised liquid waste management technologies, which are critical for promoting health and well-being in the often-remote and ecologically sensitive areas of the Himalaya. The conference also presented solid and legacy waste management in the important and fragile socio-ecology of the Himalaya as well as from a climate perspective.

Mr P. D. Rai, Integrated Mountain Initiative highlighted the growing challenges of water security in the fast growing cities of the Himalaya with a special focus on Gangtok that is a clear climate change impact. He called on an urgent policy and political action that is needed to redress it. [Read here...](#)



Partner's Corner



Workshop on sustainable development highlights key environmental challenges

The Sustainable Development Forum of Himachal Pradesh (SDFHP), a pan-Himalayan institution focused on mountain conservation and development, organised a workshop at the SM Convention Centre, Palampur. Supported by the Palampur Welfare and Environment Protection Forum, the event brought together diverse stakeholders to address the pressing environmental challenges facing Himachal Pradesh.

Dr Rajan Kotru emphasised the critical role of conservation-oriented natural capital in the state's economic development. Former bureaucrat MP Sood introduced SDFHP's objectives, inviting collective participation to drive this initiative forward. IMI president Ramesh Negi highlighted the need for a paradigm shift in development, pointing out the lack of focus on sustainable progress in the Himalayas despite its global recognition for natural beauty.

Key issues identified during the discussions included water scarcity, waste management, and tourism's impact. Participants underscored the importance of promoting education and awareness about best practices in water conservation, forest preservation, and responsible waste management. A performance-oriented approach in the hospitality sector, equitable benefits for local communities, and youth engagement were also highlighted as crucial measures.

Prominent contributors to the event included Major General DS Rana, Ashish Sharma (Palampur Municipal Corporation Commissioner), Tikender Panwar, Archana Vaidya, Randeerv Mehra, Ajit Bhagla, Col Neeraj Rana and Dr Binod Sharma.

[Read here](#)

Mr. Jigmet Takpa, President, SDFL at an event titled 'Youth for the Himalaya: Innovate, Inspire, Impact' on December 11, 2024 to mark the International Mountain Day 2024.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in collaboration with International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (NIHE) organized an event. The event centered around the theme

"Mountain Solutions for a Sustainable Future – Innovation, Adaptation, and Youth," highlighted the critical role of youth in addressing environmental challenges in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR). The main objective of the event was to showcase and support youth-driven innovations that contribute to the sustainability of the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR), catalyzing youth action on the ground. Jigmet Takpa, Vice President of Integrated Mountain Initiative and former Joint Secretary of the ministry and senior officers of ministry were present on the occasion.



International Mountain Day observed by SDFU, Uttarakhand

"Networking for Sustainable Development and Youth Empowerment in Uttarakhand" during Dr. R.S. Tolia forum on 11th December 2024...

organized by Sustainable Development Forum, Uttarakhand.



Panel Discussion on International Mountain Day on 11th December 2024, by [Darjeeling Himalaya Initiative](#) [Read more](#)

MOUNTAIN MATTERS!

Forest Cover Claims Mask Deeper Crisis: ISFR 2023 Reveals Large-Scale Forest Degradation.

The India State of Forest Report 2023 (ISFR 2023), [released](#) on December 21, once again painted an overall rosy picture of India's forest and tree cover. The 18th edition of the report, released by the Forest Survey of India (FSI), lists the change in forest and tree cover across the country over every two years based on methods including satellite imagery. [Read more](#)

Failure of climate investment – will millions choke on smoke? [Read more](#)
Act fast to mitigate a disaster in Teesta Valley, groups urge PM, CMs
Sikkim and West Bengal need to approach disasters at a landscape level instead of limiting their focus to within their respective boundaries

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Integrating community participation crucial for inclusive sanitation [Read more](#)