

MOUNTAINS CONNECT, IMI Updates

July 2026

CONSULTATION ON HIMALAYAN CHALLENGES AND ENABLING INVESTMENTS



The consultation was attended by Mr. Pradeep Singh, NITI Aayog, as the Special Guest, along with researchers, development practitioners, civil society representatives, and investors. Discussions focused on identifying nature-positive, investment-ready solutions that balance ecological conservation, climate resilience, and economic growth. Participants emphasized the need for a Himalayan-specific development model, strengthened institutions, integrated data systems, innovative financing mechanisms, and community-led approaches. The consultation concluded with a roadmap for coordinated action and investment to build a resilient, prosperous, and sustainable Himalayan future.

Dehradun, 24th April 2026: The consultation brought together experts, and practitioners and government officials to explore sustainable development pathways for the Western Himalayas. Discussions focused on climate resilience, circular economy approaches, disaster risk reduction, youth livelihoods, agriculture, tourism, and innovative financing. Participants highlighted the need for community-led development, nature-based solutions, and stronger institutional support while emphasizing the revitalization of ghost villages through sustainable livelihoods, ecotourism, and improved infrastructure. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to developing practical, investment-ready solutions that place ecological sustainability and community well-being at the centre of Himalayan development.

Guwahati, 21 April 2026: Securing a Prosperous Himalayan Future was a regional consultation held in Guwahati on 21 April 2026 that brought together experts, government officials and stakeholders to explore pathways for sustainable and inclusive development in the Himalayan and North Eastern region. Discussions emphasized biodiversity conservation, balancing community-led and market-based approaches, strengthening agriculture, promoting circular economy models, supporting youth employment and entrepreneurship, and integrating local knowledge into policymaking. Participants also stressed the importance of reinforcing existing institutions, adopting context-specific development strategies, and ensuring that investments are environmentally sustainable, culturally sensitive, and community-owned. The consultation concluded with a shared commitment to advancing integrated, resilient, and locally driven development through collaborative partnerships and stronger institutional support.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

The Himalayas, often revered as the "Water Tower of Asia," are among the world's most fragile and ecologically significant mountain systems. Today, however, they face unprecedented challenges as climate change intensifies the frequency and severity of extreme weather events. The recurring influence of 'El Niño' has become a stark reminder of how global climatic phenomena can profoundly affect our mountain ecosystems—bringing reduced snowfall, prolonged dry spells, erratic monsoon patterns, increasing forest fire risks, shrinking water resources, and mounting pressures on agriculture and livelihoods.

For the millions who call the Himalayas home, these changes are no longer distant projections; they are lived realities. Springs are drying, cropping patterns are shifting, biodiversity is under stress, and communities are becoming increasingly vulnerable to climate-induced disasters. The challenge before us is not only to understand these changing dynamics but also to respond with resilience, innovation, and collective action.

At IMI, we believe that sustainable solutions emerge when science, policy, and community knowledge work together. Our efforts continue to focus on promoting climate-resilient agriculture, strengthening local institutions, conserving natural resources, and generating evidence that informs policy and practice. Equally important is empowering mountain communities—whose traditional knowledge and stewardship have sustained these landscapes for generations—to become central partners in shaping a resilient future.

The El Niño challenge reminds us that the Himalayas are deeply interconnected with global climate systems. Protecting these mountains is therefore not merely a regional responsibility but a global imperative. As researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and citizens, we must strengthen partnerships, invest in climate adaptation, and foster knowledge-sharing that equips our communities to face an uncertain future with confidence.

Regards,
Ramesh Negi, President, IMI

IMI UPDATES

The Himalayan Cleanup 2026

The Himalayan Cleanup (THC) is a campaign organised from 26 May to 5 June every year across the Indian Himalayan Region to address plastic pollution and promote sustainable waste management by Zero Waste Himalaya and IMI. This year the campaign engaged over 8,000 volunteers to cleanup over 250 sites with waste and brand audits across 10 mountain states.

In Ladakh, the cleanup was led by Navikru Foundation along with LEDEG with support from BORDA with Leh Municipality. In Arunachal Pradesh, NGO partners AMYAA and North East Waste Collective collaborated with district administrations. LiFE Nagaland conducted the cleanup in Dimapur and Martin Luther Christian University led the cleanup with their volunteers in Meghalaya. ENFOGAL, an NGO based in UKhrul organised the cleanup for Manipur. Zero Waste Nainital along with other groups partnered for THC in Uttarakhand while in J & K, it was largely conducted by the Govt Collge for Women. In Sikkim and Darjeeling, Swachh Bharat Mission, Educational Institutions and various organisations joined the cleanup.



Read the THC 2025 report [here](#)

IMI participation in Himalayan Action School



Mr. Ramesh Negi and Mr. Amba Jamir participated in the Himalayan Action School (1–3 June 2026), organised by ActionAid India and Doon University. The event brought together policymakers, researchers, civil society, and community leaders to deliberate on climate resilience, sustainable development, and community-led governance in the Himalayas.

The discussions culminated in a call for a shared Himalayan Code for Living that places ecological sustainability, local knowledge, and inclusive development at the heart of the region's future.

NMHS update

During April–June 2026, the NMHS-supported project, Agro-Ecology, Climate Resilient Farming and Livelihood Enhancement in Border Villages of the Indian Himalayan Region, made significant progress in strengthening climate-resilient agriculture and community livelihoods across Spiti (Himachal Pradesh), Niti Valley (Uttarakhand), and Dzongu (Sikkim).

The project established one Farmer Producer Company and two Farmer Cooperative Societies to strengthen local institutions, promote collective farming, and improve market access, while initiating organic certification through the TracNet platform by registering over 220 farmers.

In Dzongu, a remote sensing and GIS-based land use assessment documented significant environmental changes, including forest expansion and declining agricultural land.

Indigenous seeds of traditional crops, including naked barley, buckwheat varieties, black pea, and red rice, were distributed to encourage agrobiodiversity conservation and climate-resilient farming, alongside the establishment of community seed banks in Niti and Dzongu. Field demonstrations on sustainable agriculture, the introduction of biofertilizers in Spiti, and the promotion of Himalayan chive (Faran/Jambu) cultivation in Uttarakhand further enhanced sustainable livelihood opportunities.

The project also contributed to scientific knowledge through the publication of a research paper in the International Journal of Farm Sciences, a technical article on Lepcha agroecology and indigenous seed systems in the 'EIACP' Resource Partner on Ecotourism Newsletter, and a feature article in 'Down To Earth' highlighting the livelihood potential of Himalayan chive in Uttarakhand's border villages.

Marking a New Chapter of Collaboration!



The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing between IMI and SKUAST Srinagar marks the beginning of a strategic partnership aimed at strengthening research, knowledge exchange, and capacity building in the Indian Himalayan Region. By combining IMI's expertise in mountain policy and development with SKUAST Srinagar's academic and research excellence, the partnership seeks to generate innovative solutions and contribute to the long-term sustainability and resilience of Himalayan ecosystems and communities.



PARTNER'S CORNER

World Environment Day Celebration



The Sustainable Development Forum Himachal Pradesh (SDFHP), the Himachal Pradesh State Forest Department, the State Pollution Control Board (PCB), and the Hati Vikas Samiti, in collaboration with the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Dhaulakuan, District Sirmaur, jointly organized a programme to commemorate World Environment Day (5th June 2026).

The programme brought together government officials, local institutions, community organizations, farmers, students, and environmental stakeholders to promote environmental conservation and sustainable development. Through awareness sessions and community participation, the event emphasized forest conservation, pollution control, sustainable agriculture, and the importance of collective action in protecting the environment.

Dr. Rajan Kotru on Punjab TV's Climate Action Show



On the occasion of World Environment Day, Dr. Rajan Kotru, GC Member of IMI participated in the Climate Action Show by a Punjab TV channel based in Chandigarh. Dr. Kotru highlighted the pressing environmental challenges facing the Himalayan region and emphasized the importance of climate-resilient development, biodiversity conservation, sustainable natural resource management, and community-led climate action.

ECOSS – Sikkim delegation at Regional Workshop on Buddhist Circuit in Bhutan



ECOSS facilitated Sikkim's participation at the regional workshop in Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh on 6–7 May 2026. The event brought together South Asian stakeholders to promote a women-led Buddhist tourism corridor. ECOSS showcased Sikkim's Buddhist heritage, community homestay model, and sustainable tourism initiatives, reinforcing regional collaboration for inclusive and community-based tourism.

ECOSS Team Visits Ilam, Nepal to Study Large Cardamom Cultivation



The ECOSS team visited Ilam, Nepal, to gain insights into the cultivation and management of large cardamom, an important cash crop across the Eastern Himalayas. Large cardamom has historically been one of Sikkim's most valuable cash crops, providing a sustainable source of income for thousands of farming households. However, in recent years, widespread viral infections and other crop diseases have significantly affected production, forcing many farmers to abandon their plantations and seek alternative sources of livelihood.

During the visit, the team met with officials of the Cardamom Research Centre, interacted with local farmers, and visited large cardamom fields to understand the cultivation practices, disease management strategies, and research initiatives being implemented in Nepal. The visit provided valuable insights that could contribute to strengthening large cardamom cultivation and supporting farming communities in Sikkim.

Meet A member Prof. John Zothanzama

IMI Association– Prof. John Zothanzama has been associated with the IMI as a member since 2015. He is currently the Joint Secretary of IMI (2023–26) and is also currently the Vice President of the IMI Mizoram Chapter ie., Mizoram Sustainable Development Foundation (MSDF). scientific research and analysis at Institutional level.



Current Affiliation– Currently working as Professor in the Department of Biotechnology at Mizoram University, Aizawl Mizoram. He is also an Expert member of Mizoram State Biodiversity Board (2026–2028) and Expert member of State Level Expert Appraisal Committee (SEAC), Mizoram (2026–2028).

Challenges

There is a great challenge for Biodiversity conservation and Environment and Ecosystem conservation in Mizoram and across the Himalayas. Creating Awareness towards these issues is a major challenge.

Future Plans

Addressing Biodiversity conservation in Mizoram through the MSDF and IMI. Addressing Biodiversity and Ecosystem conservation through scientific research and analysis at Institutional level.

Mountain matters



Eight northeastern states join hands to revive mountain springs as hill communities face water stress. Himalayan Water Partnership will bring together science, policy and community monitoring to map and revive springs across the eastern Himalayas. [Read more](#)



Eurasian Lynx photographed in Sikkim for the first time by camera traps
[Read more](#)



Centre to Form Committee on Meghalaya's Proposal to Revive Small-Scale Coal Mining
[Read more](#)

Member's write

Crushing the Himalayas: Himachal's mountains & rivers pay the price of reckless development
Ms Archana Vaidya (Member, SDFHP) [Read more](#)