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NMSHE NATIONAL MISSION FOR
SUSTAINING THE HIMALAYAN
ECOSYSTEM



A REPORT

Media Workshop on Climate Change Reporting

Gangtok, March 25-27, 2017

IHCAP Indian Himalayas
Climate Adaptation
Programme


CMS
www.cmsindia.org

A REPORT

Media Workshop on Climate Change Reporting

Gangtok, March 25-27, 2017

Jointly organized by **Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP)** under **Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)**, **Centre for Media Studies (CMS)** and **Department of Science and Technology (NMSHE)**

Venue:

Day I - Hotel Mayfair, Gangtok

Day III - Chintan Bhawan, Gangtok

About Indian Himalaya Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP)

(Strengthening Capacity on Climate Science and Adaptation in the Indian Himalayas)

Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) is a project under Global Programme Climate Change and Environment (GPCCE) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). In India it is anchored under the Framework Agreement on Scientific and Technical Cooperation (2003) between the Government of India and Government of Switzerland and is being implemented as a bilateral cooperation programme with Department of Science & Technology. The IHCAP builds on capacity and knowledge enhancement related to three pillars—scientific and technical knowledge cooperation between Indian and Swiss scientific institutions; adaptation measures for vulnerable communities; and mainstreaming adaptation policies for improved action in the Indian Himalayan Region. www.ihcap.in

About Centre for Media Studies (CMS)

Established in 1991, CMS is a not-for-profit, multi-disciplinary development research and facilitative think-tank. It endeavors to work towards responsive governance and equitable development through research, advocacy and capacity building in social development, environment, communication, media, transparency and governance issues at local and national policy levels. Its flagship programme in environment sector is VATAVARAN, a leading international festival of environmental films.

Find more details at: www.cmsindia.org

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Summary

The twin issues of climate change and sustainable development have captured the attention of governments, policy makers, scientists, media and the general public in the past two decades. The interest has been sustained due to new scientific developments as well as climate change talks taking place under the umbrella of the United Nations. It has been recognized globally that media has a central role in not only creating awareness about the causes and impacts of climate change, but also in spurring action by governments and motivating communities to take action.

While the media coverage on climate change and sustainable development has seen significant rise in the past two decades, several issues are inadequately addressed. Indian media has been covering climate change negotiations and other reports about Arctic meltdown or greenhouse gas emissions rise originating from Western news agencies and sources, while doing so it sometimes tends to ignore climate change science, policy and initiatives relating to mitigation and adaptation at the national and state levels. This is mainly due to lack of capacity among media persons at state and local levels, and lack of appreciation by newspaper editors. Journalists are not exposed to authentic sources of information, experts and other resources.

In order to address this gap, a three-day media sensitization workshop was organized by the Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Centre for Media Studies (CMS) and the Department of Science and Technology & Climate Change, Government of Sikkim (DST&CC) at Gangtok, Sikkim, from March 25 to 27, 2017. The primary idea behind this workshop was to bring scientists/ experts, international agencies, policy makers and media persons in Sikkim together on the same platform for better understanding of various aspects of climate change and its impact in the context of Sikkim and the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR).

The inaugural session was addressed by senior officials of SDC, IHCAP, UNDP and CMS. Dr. Surajit Baruah, State Project Manager, Strengthening State Strategies for Climate Actions, UNDP, welcomed the participants on behalf of the state Department of Science Technology and Climate Change. He stressed upon the much evident impact of climate change in different sectors by giving various examples. He also noted that it is important for every individual to first feel connected with the phenomena of climate change and then contribute in adaptation activities in some or the other way. Ms. Janine Kuriger, Head Swiss Cooperation Office and Counsellor, Embassy of Switzerland in India highlighted various ecosystem services that are generated from the Himalayan region and how in many ways the Indian population is extremely dependent on this biodiversity rich region.

Mr. Dinesh C Sharma, senior science journalist, firstly pointed out the important role of media (print, electronic and digital) as far as reaching out to the general public on the issue of climate change is concerned. It is only the media which has the responsibility to convey the important findings of numerous scientific studies to the public in layman terms. He also stressed upon the existing knowledge gap between scientists, policy makers and the media. This gap can be bridged only through such capacity building workshops and by ensuring efficient flow of information.

Ms Annu Anand, Head, CMS Advocacy, pointed out that CMS Media Lab has been monitoring media coverage of environmental issues during prime time on television and front pages of national dailies for the past more than a decade. Continuous media monitoring has shown a gradual increase in coverage of environmental issues including climate change during this period, as a result of increased awareness on these issues. However, she said, there a huge scope in terms of quantity and quality of coverage on climate change and sustainable development.

The inauguration was followed by technical session on 'Climate Science, Policy and Media' which focused on recent science and policy measures on climate change, challenges in reporting science of climate change and mechanism for enhancing quality coverage on climate change impacts. On second day of the workshop, the journalists were taken for day long field visit to a *dharavikas/ spring-shed* management site located in Namthang block, South Sikkim, followed by a visit to organic farms. The media persons through this field exploration activity were able to discuss with the community members about the overall impact of the *dharavikas* initiative. An interactive conversation with some of the progressive farmers also gave the participants a broad idea about the practice of organic farming in the region. The third day session dealt with understanding the gaps in reporting on climate change and how different stakeholders can contribute in minimizing the knowledge gap and ensure efficient flow of information at all levels.

Inaugural Session

March 25, 2017

The third media workshop on Climate Change, jointly organized by the Centre for Media Studies (CMS), Department of Science Technology and Climate Change (DST & CC), Government of Sikkim and Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) of Swiss Agency for Development and Corporation (SDC), began with a formal inauguration held at Mayfair Hotels and Resorts.



The ceremony began with the lighting of ceremonial lamp by Ms. Janine Kuriger, Head Swiss Cooperation Office and Counsellor, Embassy of Switzerland in India; Dr. Surajit Baruah, State Project Manager, Strengthening State Strategies for Climate Actions, UNDP; Mr. Dinesh C Sharma, senior science journalist; and Ms. Annu Anand, Head, CMS Advocacy.

The inauguration ceremony began with a welcome note by Dr. Surajit Baruah, State Project Manager, Strengthening State Strategies for Climate Actions, UNDP on behalf of the Department of Science Technology and Climate Change, Government of Sikkim. He pointed out that while the whole world is getting affected by climate change, ramifications of climate change are reflected in micro climatic conditions or regional conditions, posing a huge challenge for local communities. He further explained that though climate change is a natural phenomenon but the pressure of various anthropogenic activities has made it more severe. “Human beings have already pumped in too much of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and so its impact could be seen in all the major sectors – forest, agriculture, energy, health, making climate change a multi-dimensional problem”, he said. Considering climate change or global warming, a global concern, he said, we human beings do not take much initiatives in terms of adapting to climate change at an individual level. Dr. Baruah reiterated, that “there is lack of information and real time data on climate change because many initiatives have been taken in different sectors simultaneously but they are not necessarily oriented to address the climate change. Therefore, there needs to be collation of information, to be followed by dissemination of that information in different strata of the society, which is where the role of media comes in the context of adapting to climate change.”

Further elaborating on the theme of the programme, Ms. Janine Kuriger, Head Swiss Cooperation Office and Counsellor, Embassy of Switzerland in India, pointed that the Himalayan ecosystem is vital as it ensures ecological security to the Indian population, provides forest cover, an important source of fresh water and rich biodiversity etc. Climate Change she said, is not merely an environmental threat but also a social and developmental challenge. A continuous exchange of information amongst different stakeholders (media, government, civil societies, communities) then become extremely important for closing the existing knowledge gap. The main objective of the series of media workshops planned to take place in the Himalayan states over the next three years, is to

improve and increase the reporting on climate change highlighting impacts of climate change in simple terms so that it reaches out to the general public; to report on the climate change adaptation strategies that are already being implemented elsewhere.

Apart from the media sensitization programme, strengthening the State Action plan on Climate Change is another on-going programme under IHCAP in which support is provided to the Sikkim state government for operationalizing the SAPCC and mainstreaming climate change into all sectoral development plans.

Mr. Dinesh C Sharma, senior science journalist pointed out that “the Rio Earth summit in 1992 can be taken as turning point as far as environmental reporting is concerned, not only in India but globally. This is when the idea of climate change emerged and the whole relationship between environment and development was put forth in the public domain for the very first time “. Prior to such international negotiations, environmental reporting was largely about water pollution, air pollution and issues of deforestation.

He further explained how quantity of climate change reporting goes up mostly when international negotiations on climate change take place or when a disaster hits some part of the country or when people start talking about changing weather patterns, making climate change reporting more about coverage centered around such events. Another issue that he pointed out was, how the media persons face the challenge of relating an event to climate change i.e. whether a particular disaster that has taken place a result of climate change or not.

Since climate change is still an evolving science with numerous cross cutting dimensions (economic, community, social, developmental, urban policy, financial etc.), it becomes a complex subject for media persons to understand and disseminate it further, he said. In this regard, identifying stories related to climate change is also a challenge for media persons. One of the dilemmas that a media person often faces is whether to focus on the impact of climate change at global/ country level or at local level. Hence, the rising need for regular media capacity building conclaves on climate change.

He also stressed upon the fact that there are a number of people engaged in conducting research studies on climate change throughout the country but most media persons are not aware about them or whom to contact for correct information. So there is a huge gap in terms of flow of information. He noted that it is the responsibility of scientists and research institutes to convey information about their ongoing studies to media persons in simple language.

The inaugural session concluded with Ms. Annu Anand, Head, CMS Advocacy, congratulating the state of Sikkim to have become the first fully organic state in India, thereby appreciating the state's active participation into activities related to adaptation to climate change. She also thanked SDC for initiating the Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) and supporting the media engagement programme on climate change. Lastly, Ms. Anand briefed the audience about how the Centre for Media Studies have been studying media and its impact on policies, perceptions and practices on crucial development issues over the last 25 years. She further explained, how media monitoring has taken different forms such as research, policy, input, advocacy, seminar, publications and how CMS's initiative of VATAVARAN has become Asia's largest and amongst the top five green festivals in the world. Through the medium of films and documentaries, CMS reaches out to students, policy makers, youth, and media to help them have a deeper understanding of the various environmental issues.

The session ended with a tea break during which some of the participants interacted with experts on the issues related to climate change reporting as discussed during the inaugural session.



Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation in Sikkim

After the tea break, the participants reassembled for the first technical session. Mr. Dinesh C Sharma moderated the session and also initiated an ice breaker session wherein the participants were requested to introduce themselves and share their expectations from the workshop.

Dr. Mustafa Ali Khan, Team Leader, IHCAP, highlighted some of the key activities initiated in Sikkim under IHCAP, which is a bilateral programme between the Government of India and the Government of Switzerland. IHCAP essentially aims at building resilience of the communities and tries to bring all the stakeholders together for effective action in the IHR. IHCAP's three main objectives are to bring all researchers together for conducting meaningful research on climate change; help develop capacities of public institutions and universities in India for responding to climate change and thereby helping in implementation of adaptation actions on ground and, to bring all the stakeholders on a common platform for exchange of information.

As a result of SDC's capacity building programme on glaciology that started in 2011, modules and courses have been jointly developed by Indian and Swiss scientists. So far 19 chapters on different aspects of glaciology have been prepared and shared in the public domain for use by universities. SDC, he said is also planning to collaborate with DST and NABCONS with the aim of improving the training modules which will then be used in various training programmes for the state government officials.

Dr. Khan also shared with the participants the significance of the image of a man (Mr. Bhutia) in the programme's banner and backdrop. People like Mr. Bhutia, belong to small villages near *Teesta* which had experienced a devastating earthquake in in 2011. These are the community people who are at constant risk as the river can rise at dangerously high levels destroying the lives and livelihoods of the community nearby. So, research outputs need to be converted into adaptation actions on ground for ensuring the safety of such communities most vulnerable to climate change.

Mr. Sharma highlighted the importance of the media manual on climate change which has been developed specially for media persons. It deals with questions like, why is the IHR important to us, evidences of climate change, inter-linkages between different sectors to explain the impact of climate change etc. Most importantly, it also covers the impact of climate change on the aspect of community and how are the governments, agencies dealing with this burning issue of climate change. The manual also consists of some very interesting case studies which can help feed into stories developed by the media and to help them to link the micro impact with the bigger picture of climate change. He also pointed out that after each chapter, there are a list of references which

can help the journalists understand which are the authentic sources available out there on climate change.

Dr. Surajit Baruah, Sate Project Manager, Strengthening State Strategies for Climate Actions, spoke about the State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC), formulated by the state government with support from international agencies. During the formulation of the plan, the main objective was to identify and prioritize adaptation actions by different sectoral departments. He further noted that the village communities throughout the country have been using their traditional knowledge and adapting to climate change for last many years. So, it is important to mainstream their knowledge systems as well.

Dr. Baruah added that the climate change cell in the state has been established to conduct research aimed at preserving the Himalayan ecosystem. The cell is helping other sectoral departments to take up initiatives under climate change adaptation by making resources available from the National Climate Adaptation Fund.

Dr. R K Sharma, a glaciologist trained under IHCAP, elaborated about the glaciology study that has been going on for past four years in Sikkim. There are 84 named glaciers in Sikkim and as a part of the glacial dynamic study which started 4 years ago, temporal variability and distribution of melt water system are being studied. The study involves measuring the discharge on a daily basis during the Appalachian season when the glacier melting starts (June to October). He also explained that it is important to conduct sedimentation study as there are many hydroelectric plants (HEP) operational in downstream areas and the sediment flow can have a major impact on the



power turbines. He added that the Climate Change Cell is continuously monitoring the snout (glacier terminus), and studying the glacier velocity i.e. the rate at which the glaciers are melting vertically each year in Sikkim.

After the lunch break, the participants and had gathered once again for the technical sessions followed by round of interaction with the scientists after each presentation.

Dr. G N Raha, Director, State Meteorological Centre, pointed out that there is a huge difference between the terms, 'weather' and 'climate change' and that the media persons mustn't confuse between the two. The weather conditions are subject to change (also known as climate variability) from day to day or even within hours, while climate change is observed over a longer period of time,



typically at least more than 30 years. Climate change, he explained is regarded as the continuous change in the climatic pattern incorporating a change in the value of different climatic parameter (such as precipitation or temperature levels) and/or a change in the frequency of extreme weather events like cyclone, hailstorm, thunderstorm, drought etc.

He also discussed that there are both 'natural factors' such as changes in earth's orbit, solar changes and volcanic eruptions and human induced factors such as GHGs, transport, agriculture etc., responsible for climate change. It was also highlighted that there a massive dearth of historical scientific records/ data around the world to be able to prove signs of actual climate change.

As far as the IPCC reports on climate change are concerned, he urged media person to understand that IPCC does not carry out their own research work, it only reviews different papers and comes out with assessments based on the same.

Further he added that based on IMD's data analysis for the period 1951-2010, it has been observed that the minimum temperature is increasing while the maximum temperature is decreasing thereby affecting the overall Diurnal Temperature Range (DTR) which is essentially the difference between maximum and minimum temperature. Annual mean minimum temperatures have shown significantly increasing trends over Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Manipur, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu and Tripura. The highest increase in annual mean minimum temperature was observed for Sikkim (+0.07 degree celsius/ year). Dr. Raha concluded his presentation by stressing the fact that the Government of Indian has taken several policy initiatives to mitigate the risk but sensitization at the grassroot level is still needed. So, a meaningful synergy between the government, scientists, media, communities and other agencies is necessary to better adaptation to climate change.

Dr. G C Khanal, Additional Director, Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority (SSDMA) noted that the phenomenon of climate change is highly complex in nature. It is so because different people perceive it in different ways. He indicated that the hazard vulnerability assessment study conducted by the disaster management agency in the *Lhonak* lake region suggest that the volume of water has increased considerably resulting into flow of water from North *Lhonak* glacial lake to South *Lhonak* glacial lake making the areas of Rangpo, Chungthang, Dikchu, Singtam vulnerable to the rising threats of flashfloods. The damming of the lake he said, is due to the moraines as they are not able to sustain the volume of the water. Installation of heavy duty pipes for siphoning, installation of sensors for monitoring the water level are some of the initiatives taken to mitigate this risk.

Ms. Sarika Pradhan, Additional Secretary, Rural Management and Development Department, Government of Sikkim, spoke about Dhara Vikas – springshed development programme to revive drying springs in the hills. She said "we all should realize that every individual will have to do

their bit for the climate that is changing and there is nobody better but the media who can spread awareness about the how, what and where aspects of climate change to the layman who is actually getting affected out there". Glacial water is difficult to be tapped for domestic use and the rivers are all low-lying, hence the springs/ streams/ lakes are the only perennial sources of fresh water for the communities living in mid mountains of Sikkim. A very dynamic problem that the mountain communities face is the non-availability of piped water supply from natural springs during the winter season. During the monsoon season she explained, there is enough water gushing out of the natural springs/ *dharas* but during the winter season (or the lean season) these springs dry up due to less rainwater seeping into the soil, giving rise to water scarcity.

One of the challenges that Ms. Pradhan shared was that there was not much clarity about the overall science of springs – their source, aquifer discharge patterns, and recharge points etc. As



a result, much focus initially was given on the source of the spring and not on its resource. She added that there exists a knowledge gap on enhancing sustainability of these water resources. For doing so, the need is to generate related to drying of these springs which is presently lacking. Another challenge that she added further is that the *Dharavikas* is not possible in all sorts of terrains in Sikkim. Monitoring and evaluation is another challenge for the Rural Management and Development Department (RMDD).

Field visit

March 26, 2017

After detailed interaction with scientists and experts on various aspects of climate change and adaptation, the participants on the second day of the workshop got an opportunity to see some of the adaptation initiatives that are being taken at the grassroot level. As part of the field visit, the participants were first taken to a *dharavikas*/ springshed site located in village *Perbing Dovan*, *Namthang* block of South Sikkim district. Recognizing the issue of rising water scarcity owing to change in climatic conditions and rainfall patterns in several parts of the state, the project of '*Dharavikas*' was planned and implemented by the Rural Management and Development Department (RMDD) of the Government of Sikkim.

Mr. K B Chhetri, field facilitator at *Namthang* block, briefed journalists about the *dharavikas* project and what led to its inception in the first place. He explained how apart from the issue of drying up of natural springs, there used to be massive surface water run-off which was further damaging agricultural fields in the lower areas. In order to deal with this issue, around 1500 trenches were

constructed over an area of 20 hectares under the national scheme of MGNAREGA. These trenches helped in not just checking run-off but also helped in the process of recharge. He shared that, the discharge data from 6 springs as collected by the RMDD had also shown improvement.

Mr. Chhetri also discussed how he and few others were given training first at People's Science Institute (PSI), Dehradun and then at Advanced Center for Water Resources Development and Management (ACWADAM), Pune to gain knowledge about geo-hydrological assessment study, about types of rocks, significance of slopes for constructing these trenches etc. The trainees were then able to orient the local community members about the technicalities of constructing these trenches keeping in mind its specific dimension, rock direction, contour and its overall micro placement. Community mobilization, he said, was initially a challenge but more and more members got motivated after realizing the benefits from this initiative. It was also found that the community people, especially the 'beneficiaries' in the area are now voluntarily getting involved into cleaning up of these trenches to remove the deposited silt/clay after every two years.

The village *sarpanch*, Mr. Nima Sherpa, highlighted that much of the benefits from the project were in the form of availability of sufficient drinking water, improvement in soil moisture content were all going mostly to the village communities downstream.

The visit gave media persons an opportunity to interact with community members and understand how the initiative of *dharavikas* was a science- based and community-involved approach for the development and management of springsheds.

From the springshed site, the participants were then taken to organic farms located in village Rangbul. Sikkim is the only state to have achieved the title of 'fully organic state' under the Sikkim Organic Mission. The media persons interacted with Mr. Mani Kumar Gurung, a progressive farmer and his wife Mrs. Mela Sherpa, who explained the entire process of preparing organic manure with the use of microbes to speed up the process of fermenting. Mrs. Gurung added that they also have been producing herbal pesticides by making use of plants like *Angeri*, *Neem*, *Artemisia*, *Chilli*, *Garlic* etc. grown in their private forest.



They further shared that they have received proper training by the Department of Agriculture, Government of Sikkim to understand different components of organic farming like, training about how one can cultivate flowers and vegetables over a short period of time. The farmers here also practice organic mulching with the use of wood barks and composts in order to retain moisture in the top soil even during times of water shortage. Such practices are highly climate resilient in nature thereby helping the farmers adapt to climate change in the most effective manner.



Building bridges among media, scientists and civil society

March 27, 2017

On the last and concluding day of the media workshop, editors, media scholar, representatives from the Sikkim state government (Climate Change cell), and all the media participants gathered together at the Chintan Bhawan for an interactive roundtable session. The idea was to try and bridge the knowledge gap between different stakeholders for efficient reporting on climate change.

Mr. Dinesh C Sharma, senior science journalist welcomed the panel including Mr. P D Rai, Member of Parliament, Mr. Pema Wangchuk Dorjee, editor, Summit Times; Mr. Nirmal Manger, Journalist, The Sikkim Express; Dr. Silajit Guha, Head, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, Sikkim University and Mr. D G Shreshtha, Additional Director, Department of Science and Technology, Government of Sikkim.

Mr. Pema Wangchuk Dorjee, editor, Summit Times began the session by talking about how journalists can make stories on climate change more interesting and simple for the readers to have a better understanding of a serious subject. There is so many evidence of the impact of climate change around the world but the important question that he pointed out is how does the media in Sikkim, make the readers interested in such news. He stated that, “the media has the responsibility to connect the various dots in the simplest manner for the readers to feel linked with the issue in question, to understand the seriousness of the climate change”. In other words, linking the micro level problems like crop failure or the drying up of *dharas* to the bigger picture of climate change and then explaining the same to the villagers, is one of the major roles of the media.

He agreed to the fact there is serious lack of communication between the media, the scientists and also the traditional knowledge holders. Based on his observation, Mr. Wangchuk further stressed that only landslide stories are not enough, stories like how is the changing water conditions or the rainfall patterns effecting the village farms need to be picked up as well by the media persons.

Mr. Dinesh C Sharma, added that there is a need to bring up stories of how people are getting trained on ground about the science behind the springs/ watersheds under the *dharavikas* programme. And then connecting these on ground developments with the bigger picture of climate change is truly a challenge.

Mr. Nirmal Manger, journalist, the Sikkim Express, highlighted that Sikkim has a limited number of media houses with less number of journalists so that the journalists are already burdened. They also do not hold any specialization over a particular subject like crime or weather or politics etc. There is also a lack of sensitization programs for the media persons. This probably is the reason behind the lack of urge to cover stories related to climate change as the priority is given to other news/ topics.

He noted that journalists should carefully do an in depth analysis of the subject matter before reporting on it. He spoke about the significance of the Indian language media which can communicate with the villagers in local language and bring out more and more stories related to livelihood patterns and climate change.

On the question of accessing scientific reports, Mr. Dinesh Sharma added that authentic sources of information to have an in depth knowledge about the various developments related to scientific studies are already present, the media persons just need to locate the respective experts. There are scientific experts in ICIMOD or in remote sensing agencies in Dehradun, NGRI or in the Indian Institute of Science who are not necessarily based in Sikkim but they might be working on climate change issues in the Himalayan region or in Sikkim, particularly. There is a need for the media persons to gradually develop a relationship with these experts over a period of time by communicating with them on a regular basis, he suggested.

On the issue related to lack of urge to initiate communication from the scientist community with the media persons, Mr. D G Shreshtha, Additional Director, State Remote Sensing Application. Centre, Department of Science and Technology clarified that a scientist cannot share much information unless he has a proper past and present database available to analyze and comment upon. He urged that the media persons will have to keep a track of various developments say on the issue of glaciers or threats related GLOF etc.

Dr. Silajit Guha, Head of Department, Mass Communication and Journalism, Sikkim University, explained why is it that the climate change reporting does not appeal to him as a reader. There are numerous indigenous communities who are preserving the nature by one or the other way but media is not able to do stories on them and connect their indigenous practices with the bigger picture of climate change. More so, unlike other areas of journalism like politics, environmental journalism is highly futuristic in nature instead of being need based. So, for a reader it becomes very difficult to imagine or understand what the situation perhaps would be after 20 years down the line.

Another challenge that the media faces is that they cannot use much of statistics and technical data in their stories but some scientific stories do require the usage of data in order to ensure a level of accuracy and authenticity. He also noted that "there is indeed a serious dearth of data but investigating at the grassroot level cannot solve the problem as there is no denying to the fact that there is a complete disconnect between the media and the public". There is surely a bigger threat in terms of climate change but a reader is more interested in any science news which affects his daily life in one way or the other. In the last, he highlighting that it is a responsibility of every media person to train themselves from time to time based on the perceptions of the readers on the state of reporting.

Mr. P D Rai, member of parliament from Sikkim, in his concluding remarks, highlighted the undeniable need to connect the local events with the global agreements. He also shared his concerns on how everybody tends to believe whatever is shared on their cell phones i.e. no background check

is done before reporting about it. He felt that media persons should go through all the possible repositories of information or data, be it from the *Niti Aayog*, or whether its RBI data or whether it is the Government of Sikkim data or from other reliable resources. The subject of the story should thus be well researched upon.

Mr. Rai announced that the state government was preparing an umbrella legislation for the implementation of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Sikkim. This path-breaking law will be called “Well Being of Generations Act” and it is in the final stages of preparation. As many as 32 consultations have been held with experts to give a final shape to the proposed law. “Sikkim would be the first state in India to enact such a legislation for implementation of 169 targets set under 17 MDGs which practically cover all aspects of human development,” Rai said. There will be several subordinate legislations, rules and regulations under this law for implementation of SDGs in various sectors including climate change and disaster risk reduction.

Sikkim, Mr. Rai said, being climate change hotspot provided a great opportunity for journalists to report on the subject. All such reporting should be evidence-based and not biased or based on generalizations. “Journalists can play the role of a watchdog when it comes to reporting impacts of climate change on communities and implementation of adaptation projects on the ground.”

The interactive media roundtable session was followed by distribution of certificates to all the participants.

Feedback

State level media sensitization workshop, conducted over a period of three days, saw active participation from experts as well as media persons. Overall, there was a positive feedback from the participants in terms of the format of the workshop including informative technical sessions followed by a field visit and an extensive interaction session. The participants particularly felt the need for more such capacity building programmes for giving the media an opportunity to deeply understand the issue of climate change and to communicate with the rural communities for understanding the situation on ground.

Important takeaways from the workshop, as highlighted by some participants, was the understanding that climate change is not an event but a process and so its reporting should be dynamic covering different dimensions of climate change. The participants also learnt that media persons should prioritize stories that essentially deal with the perceptions of village community members, having different source of livelihood related to climate change. Reporting on traditional knowledge for various conservation activities on ground can also be an important aspect.

One of the media persons felt that media participation was lacking and that there could have been a greater scope for group discussions based on the field visit.



Annex 1 – Workshop Agenda

Jointly organized by the Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP)
of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
and Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India
in collaboration with Department of Science & Technology and Climate Change,
Government of Sikkim; and Centre for Media Studies (CMS)

25-27 MARCH 2017

DAY 1: MARCH 25, 2017

Venue – Teesta Hall, HOTEL MAYFAIR, Gangtok, Sikkim

Inaugural Session (10.30 am to 12.00 noon)

10.30 am	Registration
11.00 am	Welcome Address by Dr. Surajit Baruah, State Project Manager, Strengthening State Strategies for Climate Actions, UNDP, Department of Science & Technology and Climate Change, Government of Sikkim
Launch of IHCAP training manuals (Journalists' training manual and trainers' manual) Distribution of Souvenirs to dignitaries	
11.15 am	Address by Head Swiss Cooperation Office and Counsellor, Embassy of Switzerland in India, Ms. Janine Kuriger
11.35 am	Address by Mr. Dinesh C Sharma, Senior Science Journalist
12.00 noon	Vote of Thanks by Head, CMS Advocacy, Ms. Annu Anand
12.10 -1.00 pm	LUNCH

DAY 1: MARCH 25, 2017

Technical Session - Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation in Sikkim (1:00 pm – 5:30 pm)
Chair: Mr. Dinesh C Sharma

1.00 pm	Icebreaker and Introduction of Participants	
1.10 pm	Challenges of reporting Climate Adaptation with examples of live stories from the region and Introduction to IHCAP's media manual on Climate Reporting	Mr. Dinesh C Sharma, Senior Science Journalist
2.30 pm	IHCAP's activities in Sikkim	Dr. Mustafa Khan, Team Leader, IHCAP
2.50 pm	Discussion by Moderator on Media Aspects of the Presentation and Interaction	
3.00 pm	Implementation of State Climate Action Plan & Challenges in Effective Communication	Dr. Surajit Baruah, State Project Manager, Strengthening State Strategies for Climate Actions, UNDP, Department of Science & Technology and Climate Change, Government of Sikkim
3.15 pm	Discussion by Moderator on Media Aspects of the Presentation and Interaction	
3.25 pm	Changing climate in Eastern Himalayas with special reference to Sikkim	Dr. Gopi Nath Raha, Director, State Meteorological Centre, Gangtok
3.40 pm	Discussion by Moderator on Media Aspects of the Presentation and Interaction	
3.50 pm	Multi- hazard risk vulnerability assessment of Sikkim with special focus on GLOF	Dr. G C Khanal, Additional Director, Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority (SSDMA), Gangtok
4.05 pm	Discussion by Moderator on Media Aspects of the Presentation and Interaction	

4.15 pm	Ground level challenges faced during implementation strategy of the <i>Dhara Vikas</i>	Ms. Sarika Pradhan , <i>Additional Secretary, Rural Management and Development Department</i>
4.30 pm	Discussion by Moderator on Media Aspects of the Presentation and Interaction	
4.40 pm	Chair's Remarks	
4.50 pm onwards	Q & A Round	

DAY 2: MARCH 26, 2017 (8.00 am to 4.30 pm)

7:30 am	Assembly at Chintan Bhawan
8.00 am	Departure for the field visit site
	Visit to village <i>Perbing</i> to showcase <i>dharavikas</i> / spring-shed management and organic farming
1.30 pm	Lunch and group photograph

DAY 3: MARCH 27, 2017

Venue – Meeting Hall, Chintan Bhawan

Media Round-table (9.30 am to 2.00 pm)

9.30 am	Registration	
10.00 am	Building bridges among media, scientists and civil society	Mr. Pema Wangchuk Dorjee , <i>Consulting Editor, Summit Times</i>
		Mr. Dinesh C Sharma , <i>Senior Science Journalist</i>
		Dr. Ghanshyam Sharma , <i>Program Manager, The Mountain Institute of India</i>
		Dr. Silajit Guha , <i>Associate Professor, Head, Department of Mass Communication, Sikkim University</i>
		Mr. Nirmal Manger , <i>journalist, Sikkim Express</i>
		Representative from the Department of Science and Technology and Climate Change, Government of Sikkim
		Ms. Annu Anand , <i>Head, CMS Advocacy</i>
12.30 pm	Experience sharing and story ideas on Climate Change	
1.00 pm	Presentation of Certificates	
1.30 pm	Lunch	

Annex 2 – list of participants

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जनवायु परिवर्तन पर मीडियाकर्मियों के लिए कार्यशाला आयोजित



गंगटोक, 27 मार्च (का.सं.)। राज्य के मीडियाकर्मियों के लिए आयोजित तीन दिवसीय कार्यशाला और विज्ञानियों के बीच काफ़ी दूरी को मिटाने के लिए आयोजन की गई थी। अन्य है जो यह कानून लागू पड़ा है। उन्होंने कहा कि रिपोर्टों पर आधारित होनी चाहिए।

Climate Change workshop focuses on Role of Media



Press Release

capital on Saturday. The three-day workshop has been jointly organised by the Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Counsellor, Embassy of Switzerland in India, said "Climate change, apart from being an environmental threat, is also a social and development challenge." She said the Himalayas

Media workshop on Climate Change Reporting

ARJAN PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 25 MAR

A three-day media workshop on Climate Change Reporting has underway here today. The workshop has been jointly organised by the Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India, in collaboration with Department of Science & Technology and Climate



of climate change. Team leader-IHCAP, Dr. Mustafa Ali Khan, during his address, informed about the works done under the project in Sikkim. Director-IHCAP, Meteorological Centre, Gangtok, Dr. Gopi Nath Raha, highlighted on how climate change takes place and presented the data on effects of climate change in India. Similarly, Additional

is begun different Indian region, culture. It has faced to the implementation of the Dharm Vihar programme, an initiative to revive and maintain driving traditions

IHCAP and CMS join hands to conduct a series of media workshops in the Indian Himalayan Region

SIKKIM MAIL REPORT
Gangtok, March 22:

The impact of climate change in the Himalayan region is more pronounced than in other regions, particularly in the

A media workshop on climate change reporting is being organized at Gangtok from March 25 to 27, to engage media persons in the dialogue on climate change adaptation.

will interact with state-level journalists from different media outlets in the Himalayan states. The workshops will include presentations by scientists on the issue of climate change, field

Media workshop on Climate Change concludes

SIKKIM MAIL REPORT

Gangtok, 27 Mar:

The three-day media workshop on climate change reporting organized by the Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) of the

implementation of targets set under 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is practically covers all aspects of human development. "There will be no sustainable development

Media workshop on...

IHCAP and CMS to promote climate change reporting in Northeast

Gangtok, Mar 22: To encourage accurate reporting of climate change, science and adaptation measures in the Indian Himalayas, the Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC),

scientists on the issue of climate change, field visits to expose participants to community-level impacts and work related to climate change adaptation, and discussion on media-related issues. "The real challenge of climate change reporting is to connect changes

Under the programme, a series of workshops will be held in Uttarakhand, Sikkim, West Bengal, Meghalaya, Assam, Tripura, Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur, Jammu and Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh, Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) is a project under the

तीन दिवसीय राज्यस्तरीय ...

समाजवादी दुरीलाई कम गर्नपर्ने विषयमा पनि प्यानल चर्चा भयो। यस वर्षमा वरिष्ठ सम्पादक तथा पत्रकार मेमा बाइबुका दोर्जी, निर्मल मगर, दिनेश सी शर्मा, सिक्किम विश्वविद्यालयका प्राध्यापक सिलाजित मुहा तथा मिशन एवं तस्मिकी विभागका अधिकारी डीजी

जलवायुमाथि तीन दिवसीय कार्यशालाको समापन

सिक्किमले एसडीजीएस कार्यान्वयन गर्न कानून बनाउने



गंगटोक, २५ मार्च (सि.मि.)। जलवायु परिवर्तनको चुनौती र अनुकूलनका लागि संविधानको १४ वटा अनुच्छेदको कार्यान्वयन हेतु सिक्किम सरकारले कार्यशाला आयोजित गरेको छ।

Media workshop on climate change reporting

SE Report

GANGTOK, March 22: A three-day media workshop on climate change reporting is being held at Gangtok from March 25 to 27 to engage media including those from Sikkim in the dialogue of climate change adaptation.

The workshop organisers are Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) of Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Department of Science and Centre for Media Studies (CMS), a press release informs.

"The impact of climate change in the Himalayan region is more pronounced than in other regions, particularly on water resources, livelihoods and biodiversity. These impacts can be minimized or people can adapt to climate changes through awareness and sensitization of local communities. In this process, media can play a critical role," said the organizers.

"Climate change directly affects vital economic sectors and livelihoods of the communities in the Himalayas. We believe that an

informed media has an important role to play for spreading awareness and stimulating action on climate change adaptation and mitigation. We hope that the media workshops will trigger more reporting on climate change issues in the Himalayan region by journalists," added Ms. Janine Kuriger, Head, Swiss Cooperation Office and Counsellor, Embassy of Switzerland in India.

During the workshop, senior thematic experts, scientists and policymakers will interact with State-level

journalists from different media outlets in the Himalayan states. The workshop will include presentations by scientists on the issue of climate change, field visits to expose participants to community-level impacts and work related to climate change adaptation, and discussion on media-related issues.

"The real challenge of climate change reporting is to connect changes occurring at the local level with global

