

Biodiversity Action Day events conclude with workshop on Biodiversity and Climate Change

a NOW REPORT

GANGTOK, 13 May: Biodiversity action day of the International Year for Biodiversity 2010, observed on the theme "Biodiversity for Development", concluded with a workshop here today. A two-day eco-trek followed by daylong workshop was organized from 11 to 13 May by The Mountain Institute-India jointly with State Council for Science & Technology, with support from German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), KfW and Inwent along with GEO magazine. The action day is part of a global program of German Ministries for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU).

The 2-day eco-trek was coordinated by Nima Tashi Bhutia from TMI-India and Sonam Rinchen Lepcha from State Council of Science & Technology, an official press release informs. The participants included officials from GTZ, Inwent, GEO, BMZ, nature guides, social workers,



eco-tourism experts from Khangchendzonga Conservation Committee (KCC), a taxonomist from SCST and research scholar from ATREE.

The team visited the holy lake at Khechupalri in West Sikkim and then trekked to Yuksam via Leythang village on 11 May. On arrival at Yuksam, the team interacted with the members of KCC and other tourism stakehold-

ers there. The next day, the team Norbugang (coronation throne), Karthok lake, KNP check post, Zero waste centre, home stays and interacted with the local community.

The basic idea of the trek was to explore an ecosystem in the buffer village of Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP) from a "biodiversity and development" viewpoint with spe-

cial focus on "ecotourism" as an opportunity for Biodiversity conservation, the release explains.

Today, a state-level workshop was organized on Biodiversity and Climate Change at the Forest conference hall here, jointly with Sikkim State Biodiversity Board of Forest Department.

The workshop started with an inaugural address by Sec-

retary, SCST, ML Arrawatia, who also gave a brief background on the proposed collaborative work with GTZ to develop the State Action Plan for Climate Change.

This was followed by a technical session chaired by Dr. Jyoti Prakasha Tamang, Senior Reader and Head, Botany Dept. Sikkim Government College. The presentations during the technical

session included ones on Biodiversity and its importance to Sikkim by Usha Lachungpa, Senior Research Officer, Forest Deptt; Enhancing rural water (Dhara Vikash) and adaptation to climate change by Dr. Sandeep Tambe, Additional Secretary, RMⅅ Biodiversity and Traditional documentation by Dr. Ghanashyam Sharma, Program Manager TMI-India; Experience sharing and background on Biodiversity action day by Vera Scholz, Program Coordinator, GTZ; Phenological variation of Rhododendron in relation to climate change by LK Rai from GBPHIED Institute.

This technical session was followed by a group discussion on biodiversity and climate change. The participants were divided into three groups, with each group proposing ideas and inputs for the State Action Plan for Climate Change. The output of this group discussion is expected to contribute to the drafting and brainstorming session for the State Action Plan for Climate Change proposed for 14 and 15 May 2010.