

# UNDP-DST collaboration to assess climate change risk in Sikkim

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The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) would work to enhance the assessment of climate change risk and vulnerability in Sikkim in collaboration with the State Science and Technology department (DST).

The UNDP in partnership with Swiss Agency of Development and Cooperation (SDC) will be implementing a project on 'Strengthening state strategies for Climate Action' in three States – Sikkim, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand, with an overall goal to integrate climate change actions into sub national planning.

The issues were discussed during an orientation programme on climate change vulnerability and risk assessment in Sikkim at a local hotel here today. UNDP State project manager Surajit Baruah, Prof. N.H. Ravindranath of Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, State Forest



Experts and officials during the orientation programme at Gangtok on Thursday.

principal secretary Thomas Chandy, DST additional director D.G. Shrestha were present during the programme. The orientation was organized for officials of various line departments like Forest, Agriculture, Disaster Management, PHE, Health and others in collaboration with Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme. The project is being taken up under the Environment and Forest ministry.

"We have focused on these three States, particularly because two of them are Himalayan States, which are

directly feeling the impact of global climatic change. Madhya Pradesh has been shortlisted owing to its arid climate. We will be working to institutionalize climatic assessment in the State as well as assist in drafting the State Action Plans on Climate Change," said Surajit Baruah.

The outcome of the project will be enhanced capabilities of State authorities to implement SAPCCs, experiences and approach of the project will gain national and international visibility.

As part of the orientation programme, each of the involved line department were urged to lay out vulnerability of different sectors, challenges faced, and the decisive action that needs to be carried in sensitizing the people about

it as well work on avoiding such climatic risks. The major interventions in these sectors will be mobilization of appropriate expertise, capacity building of resource persons and institutions, facilitation of implementation of strategies and knowledge sharing.

Forest principal secretary Thomas Chandy, in his address said, "The plans will be formulated keeping organic farming and tourism in the backdrop. The line of work should revolve around the risk imposed on the organic farming sector as well as the adverse effect on and coping method to be used with regards to tourism sector as well."

Prof. Ravindranath emphasized on how Sikkim has been a model State with

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regards to climate conservation. "The endeavors taken up by the State with regards to climate conservation has been exemplary. The assessment from the State will play a major role in national planning for climate change as well. Although, there is an urgent need for infrastructural development for better assessment with better machinery, we are hopeful, that the partnership with the State will reap benefits." He embarked on climate change vulnerability assessment in Himalayan States with special reference to Sikkim Himalaya.

It was noted that, although considerations were made to include neighboring States for assessment but no consideration were taken with regards to neighbouring countries of Sikkim.