



## Save Himalaya Campaign Creating Network of Stakeholders

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The ‘**Save Himalaya**’ campaign, is an initiative by Indian Environmental Society with GLOBE Regional help Desk Office for Asia Pacific for showcasing the urgent need for conserving the ecology of the mighty Himalayas.



It aims at preserving the countries guardian mountain range, and attracts people across the states who will pledge for safeguarding the Himalayas as part of the campaign. The mammoth involvement of the youth/school students for the cause will add luster to the campaign. During the campaign from all regions of the states will vowed to preserve the natural resources of the Himalayas that are being ravaged for commercial purposes.

Himalayan ecosystem is vital to the ecological security of the Indian landmass. It provides forest cover, feeds perennial rivers that provide water for drinking, irrigation, and hydropower, and provides a home and a basis for sustainable biodiversity, agriculture, and tourism.

*“The Himalayan ecosystem is highly vulnerable to the stress caused by increased pressure of population, exploitation of natural resources and other related challenges. Climate change may adversely impact the Himalayan ecosystem through increased temperature, altered precipitation patterns, and episodes or drought”.*

Considering the fragility and importance of the Himalaya, **The Prime Minister’s Council on Climate Change (PMCCC) launched a National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) in June 2008 which comprises of eight major national missions. The “National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE)”** is one among those. The Department of Science & Technology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India has been entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating and implementing this mission.

The mission aims to understand the complex processes affecting the Himalayan ecosystem and evolve suitable management and policy measures for sustaining and



safeguarding the Himalayan ecosystem. It also aims at developing, in a time bound manner, a sustainable national capacity to continuously assess the health status of the

Himalayan ecosystem and assist Himalayan States in implementing actions selected for sustainable development. The fragility of Himalaya calls for dedicated and coordinated efforts from all stakeholders that include state and central governments, non-government organizations, academic institutions, civil society organizations, etc.

**The mission attempts to address some important issues concerning:**

1. Himalayan glaciers and the associated hydrological consequences.
2. Biodiversity conservation and protection.
3. Wildlife conservation and protection.
4. Traditional knowledge societies and their livelihood, and
5. Planning for sustaining of the Himalayan Ecosystem.

**The Objectives of NMSHE are:**

1. Networking of knowledge institutions engaged in research on Himalayan Ecosystem and to generate a coherent database for its sustainable development
2. Building Human and Institutional capacities in climate change related aspects
3. To assist the IHR States with informed actions required for the sustenance of the region.
4. To assess the socio-economic and ecological consequences of global environmental changes and design appropriate strategies for growth in the economy of the region
5. To study traditional knowledge systems for community participation in adaptation, mitigation and coping mechanisms
6. To detect and decouple natural and anthropogenic global environmental changes and project future trends on potential impacts
7. To evaluate policy alternatives for regional development plans
8. To create awareness amongst stakeholders in the region
9. To develop regional cooperation to generate a strong knowledge and database for policy interventions.



The NMSHE is one mission which needs a unique implementation strategy. This is a mission where objective is not to just achieve certain time targeted goals but to put in place certain strategies and plans to achieve sustenance of Himalayan ecosystem on a long term basis.

**This obviously cannot be achieved through actions by government alone and would need active participation and enrolment of all stakeholders.**

**Efforts should be made to create a network of all major stakeholders and enroll them with the mission to discuss and debate possible strategies, actions and plans which can help achieving long term sustenance of Himalayan ecosystem.**

*‘Mountain Learning and Knowledge Centre’ can play an important role in strengthening such trans-boundary exchange of information among the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush –Himalayas area.*

*With this thought, Indian Environmental Society and GLOBE Regional Help Desk Office for Asia Pacific has come up with an initiative to Save Himalaya Campaign for Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem, one of the eight missions of Government of India’s National Action Plan for Climate Change (NAPCC).*

**The purpose of the campaign is to bring all the stakeholders on a single platform to discuss and debate the possible strategies, actions and plans which can help achieving the mission’s objectives.**

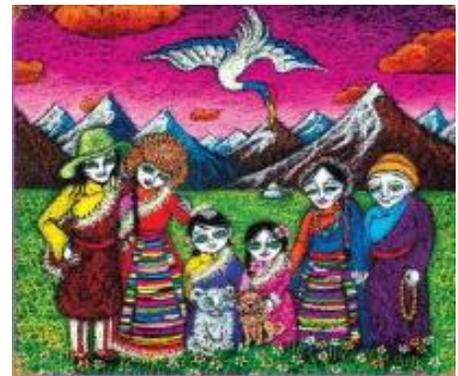
The NMSHE being a national mission has a challenge to evolve a coordinated approach with the participation of all the stakeholders from the Himalayan States of India, therefore, requiring a unique implementation strategy. This is a mission where the aim is not only to achieve time targeted goals but also to put in place specific strategies and plans to achieve sustenance of Himalayan ecosystem on a long term basis.



**Creation of Knowledge Networks and Human & Institutional Capacity Building are the key areas which need to be given priority. The expected outcomes of the campaign are:**

1. Enrolment of youth/schools/institutions in the campaign.
2. Identification of knowledge gaps which need to be addressed through human & institutional capacity building in climate change related aspects.
3. Identification of possible knowledge networks and R&D Projects.
4. Identify roles of state governments/ central ministries and others.

If it is climate change as an area, one will recognize that the science and policy interface at a global platform has a big gap. In the Himalayan region, it becomes more relevant and pertinent, because the ecosystem we deal with is very fragile; therefore, the vulnerability of Himalayan ecosystem has to be protected necessarily by certain regulatory path ways. The process needs to be based on knowledge and social behavior, and that is a disconnect at the moment. ***Save Himalaya Campaign***” is a programme to involve the youth i.e. the students and teachers of schools associated with the GLOBE Program.



The Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) program is a worldwide hands-on, primary and secondary school-based science and education program. GLOBE's vision promotes and supports students, teachers and scientists to collaborate on inquiry-based investigations of the environment and the Earth system. With the help of GLOBE program, students learn how to determine the health of an environmental system. We assume that we can keep dumping pollutants and somehow the environment will take care of them. In this program students have the opportunity to check their water system and can know whether the water system is polluted or healthy. Also they can learn how to make good measurements.



**The GLOBE Program**



**The “Save Himalaya Campaign” involves the GLOBE school students and teachers of the above mentioned states of India namely Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram , Tripura, Assam, West Bengal and Nepal.**

### **Various activities proposed under this programme:-**

- ✚ The first part is mode action to connect knowledge institutions, community based organizations and community as a whole to sit together and discuss issues concerning the sustainability of Himalayan Ecosystem. This will be done through building capacities of both institutions and people and inter connect them.
- ✚ Celebration of various days in the Indian Himalayan Region like: International Mountain Day, International Day for Biological Diversity etc. youth will be made aware of the global concerns about climate change in light of the “Save Himalaya” theme with local perspective.
- ✚ Learning Expedition: excellent venue for GLOBE people to people interaction i.e., students to interact with scientists and with each other via Exchange Program. Students will provide presentations describing their GLOBE research, and take part in field activities, displays, people to people interaction among scientists, teachers/other students and cultural events.
- ✚ Ecotourism: Recognizing tourism as inevitable for the Himalayan region, we aim to make all efforts to promote a sustainable form of tourism in the area, one that conserves the local natural and cultural heritage while ensuring maximum benefits for local people.

THE beauty of the Himalaya is in danger. In his search for material prosperity man is moving into the mountains, exploiting the natural riches, but with typical callousness doing little to replenish what he has extracted. What were once lush forests are now deserts, the bird and animal life is dwindling, and unless there is a massive effort to change this unhappy trend, the magic of the greater mountains may be lost forever. "Saving the Himalayas should be the focal point of discussion. And all the Himalayan countries should come together to save the mountain chain.

**“So join hands to save Himalaya, Save Water, Save Life’**