HIMALAYAN CLIMATE JUSTICE YATRA IN SUPPORT OF GLOBAL ACTIONS

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Jubilee South APMDD Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development

INSAF

Environics Trust

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A. BACKGROUND NOTE

Himalayan Communities Warn against Destructive Development and Join Global Civil Society and demand for Equity and Fairshare

The Himalayas are not just a mere range of mountains, but the source of our very existence and survival. They are the source of some of the largest river-systems and basins in the world, which provides our country with 60% of its water requirement. Himalayan region contains the great Indo-Gangetic alluvial plain which is known as the 'grain basket of South Asia'. Himalayan forests have been able to reduce carbon emissions by over 20%, being a key factor in mitigating and controlling climate change. Himalayas is the reason why we have been getting our bountiful monsoons every year on which the survival of the rest of India depends. Himalayan region contains states of diverse cultures and communities. This is one of the few places where culturally diverse communities live with their lives and livelihood intricately woven with nature. It also play very crucial role in the ecological balance in the world.

Global warming induced climate change has triggered events such as melting glaciers, rising sea levels and changing weather patterns. This in turn has lead to storms, droughts, flash floods, cloudbursts, change in vegetation. Growing body of scientific evidence has established that this phenomenon is directly linked to unprecedented amount of GHG gases released in the atmosphere largely due to burning of fossil fuels since the beginning of industrialization in last century. The situation is likely to worsen as countries with low industrialization including China and India began to pursue the same path of carbon based economic growth.

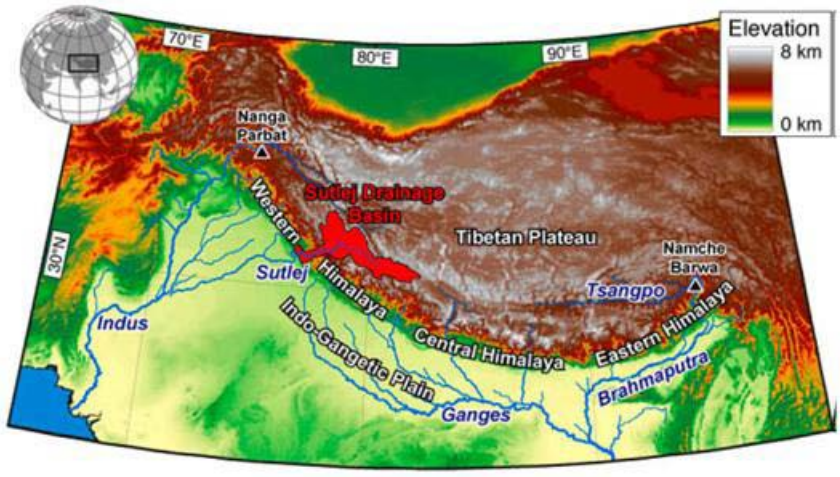
The impact of climate change is not distributed evenly across the world. Mountain eco-systems are more sensitive to the habitat and climate change due to the interaction of tectonic, geomorphic, ecological and climate agents. For instance, temperatures are rising more rapidly in the Himalayas than the global average. Over the last decade the average temperature in Nepal has risen 0.6 degrees, compared with an increase in average temperatures globally of 0.7 degrees over the last hundred years (Gravgaard, 2010). In another Himalayan region, Tibetan Plateau, temperatures have gone up over three times the global average (Schell, 2010). On an average, surface air temperatures in the Himalayan region have gone up to 1.0 degree in last decade (Srinivasan J, 2006). For this reason, Himalayas, have been identified as critical amongst regions in the world.

Communities inhabiting mountain ecosystems are particularly vulnerable to extreme weather conditions such as high temperatures, altering rainfall patterns, receding glaciers and permafrost thawing, etc. Recent instances include the disastrous floods and cloud bursts, the apple orchards shifting towards higher altitude seeking lesser temperatures and arrival of mosquitoes even at high altitudes are clearly reflective of these changes. This vulnerability further exacerbates due to high dependency on natural resources for livelihoods.

Climate change is a dynamic phenomenon and interplays with a variety of factors as causes and results in its spatial presence. The transient NW Himalayas are witness to massive earthquakes in the region and the region remains tectonically active, the climatic parameters have a bearing in adding to the vulnerability of the geophysical form, the point here to argue is (which is more exemplified by

the 2013 disaster in the Western Himalayas) that climatic parameters become one of the risks these transient environments collectively face and further delineates the boundary of risks, Rivers valley's therefore become natural vulnerable zones. Broadly, the Himalayan Frontal region, Himalayan Crest and the Tibetan Plateau define the orogenic front and interior of the Himalayan Systems, the presence of major thrust and fault systems has always brought challenges to physical development and coping capacities are only limited because of the consistent changes in the transient environment. Hydropower development and its integrated components demand heavy machinery, construction, drilling, excavation, blasting and control riverine flows for generating power. The research done by Wulf et. al provides a holistic insight into (although acceptance of limited data availability due to sparse climatic meteorology and consistent long term monitoring and studies remains a limitation) the interrelations among these three regions and how peak event days trigger the river behavior or so more to say river morphology in response to the events occurring in its upper reaches. Most importantly the author talks about the sediment budget and uncertainties in case of events triggered by climate change or regional micro climatic interrelations.

Physiography and Climate Controls



Topographic overview of Central Asia and Major Himalayan River Systems. Elevation and river routing is based on the SRTM30 dataset.

Physiographically, the Himalayan arc forms a 150-400 km long transition between the low-elevated (<0.5 km) Indo-Gangetic Plain to the south and the high-elevated (~5 km) Tibetan Plateau to the north [Fielding et al., 1994].

The present topography of the high, laterally extensive Tibetan Plateau and surrounding orogens exerts strong influence on atmospheric processes. On a continental scale, the high topography poses a physical obstacle to atmospheric circulations and acts as an elevated heating surface, which intensifies the South Asian monsoon [Boos and Kuang, 2010; Flohn, 1957; Hahn and Manabe, 1975]. At regional scale, orographic barriers influence precipitation patterns and air temperatures, which directly control runoff and surface erosion processes.

Especially extreme weather events, like rainstorms, can have a profound impact on the character and rates of surface erosion processes [Baker and Kale, 1998; Bookhagen et al., 2005a; Coppus and Imeson, 2002; Hartshorn et al., 2002]. Heavy rainstorms in the Himalaya repeatedly cause devastating floods and landslides, which result in loss of life and property, and mobilize large sediment volumes that damaged hydropower infrastructures [Houze et al., 2011; Webster et al., 2011]. For the next century, it is projected that more intense and increasingly direct rainfall runoff

will lead to more flooding and landsliding [Chalise and Khanal, 2001; Immerzeel, 2008; Kumar et al., 2011]

Based on the magnitude-frequency relation of maximum summer rainstorms in the orogenic interior, such daily rainstorms re-occur at intervals of three to five years. Additional analyses of all 80 weather stations in Himachal Pradesh reveal that these two storms were characterized by a large spatial extent (>100 km), lasted 2-3 days in most records, and migrated from the orogenic front across the main orographic barrier into the orogenic interior. The 10-year record indicates that 17 such rainstorms occurred at the orogenic front, but only ten reached the orogenic interior.[The study estimated 17 peak Suspended Sediment concentration (SSC) events over 33 peak SSC days spread along the main stem of River Sutlej at Namgia (7|4|3|75), Jangi (3|1|1|100), Karcham (3|2|1|50) and Wangtoo (20|8|5|63) where the figures indicate Peak SSC days, Peak SSC events, events caused by rainstorms and percentage contribution of rainstorm events respectively. Concluding the case study of Baspa, the author concludes that 40% of the summer precipitation falls during 4-6 rainstorm events in both regions (Orogen Interior and Exterior), rainstorm intensity in orogenic interior varies considerably more than at the orogenic front.]

The trigger in the upper reaches of Sutlej valley is low Normalised Differentiated Vegetation Index (NDVI) which is 0.07, Ganvi which is in the Western part of Sutlej River axis has much higher NDVI.The rainfall range is 380 mm – 410 mm from Namgia to Wangtoo and contributes 37 and 17% respectively, the majority of flow discharge source is snow followed by rainfall and ice. High runoff is interpreted at Jangi (33%), Karchham (41%) and Wangtoo (50%) in the summer period.The sediment yield in Baspa is the highest at 1717 t km-2 yr-1 and it gradually increases from Namgia towards Wangtoo from 223 to 615 t km-2 yr-1 indicating the highly glaciated Baspa Valley and contribution of sediments despite have a low concentration of sediments at 0.80 gl-1-.

The sediment concentration remains in excess of 2.20 at Namgia, Karchham and Wangtoo, the yield increases as the cumulative catchment area increases at the downstream site.The orogenic interior has steep slopes with less NDVI and exposed alluvial fans which are readily erodible and rainstorms trigger their mobilization, the riverbed which already has transiently stored sediments could also be mobilized due to increase discharge of snow and glacial melts and may increase the contribution of riverbed load in the overall sediment load.

What Himalaya Needs?

The Himalayan States and particularly Himachal Pradesh demands the formulation of an industrial policy that intensively promotes decentralised and green growth. Opportunities are abound with Horticulture, Medicinal Plants, agriculture, decentralized power generation systems, community based tourism.

Essentially these industries that need positive discrimination and if they are encouraged with the right kind of incentives the Gross Value added per invested rupee will be positive and much larger than the short run fly-by-night industrialization which would have devastated the basis for long term sustenance.

The deleterious effect of the massive change in the ecosystems, displacement and deprivation of people and the poor rate of assimilation of local employees in the industry (under 10 percent as against a stated policy of 70 percent) is a clarion call for change. While the State seems to be trying to extend the current concessions, it is clear that this model only benefits the investors and investment bankers, the owners, the managers, corrupt politicians and other elite while crushing the local people and annihilating the local environment which will have long term implications on the ecosystems and the community. In an era when Climate Change is a widely debated issue, it calls for an urgent change in the industrial policies and the package for promotion should clearly aim at green growth.

Himalayan Communities Join the Call of Global Civil Society

Himalayan Communities through this statement join the call for equity and fair share in global climate action and warn the global community of the irreparable damage that will be caused if the Himalayan ecosystems are disturbed. Climate science paints a frightening picture—one that tells us that urgent and dramatic action is needed to have any chance at stopping irreversible global warming. This urgency is not just about the planet and the environment; it is also about people, and humanity's capacity to secure safe and dignified lives for all. The science is unambiguous: the next 10–15 years are critical if the most dangerous effects of climate change are to be avoided. Today, the world is 0.85°C warmer than pre-industrial levels, and many people and ecosystems are already experiencing devastating impacts. Exceeding 1.5°C will entail unacceptable impacts for billions of people and risk crossing irreversible tipping points. We can only emit a finite amount of greenhouse gases— an amount known as the 'global carbon budget'—if we wish to keep overall increases beneath 1.5°C or even 2°C. The science indicates we are reaching this limit very quickly, and may even have exceeded it. Accepting the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)) scenarios does provide us with a global carbon budget, but one that will be consumed in 10–20 years at current emissions levels and entail very significant levels of risk. A commitment to keep at least within this limited budget, and to share the effort of doing so equitably and fairly, is at the heart of the international debate around climate change.

We demand:

A. Stop Destructive Development

1. *Completely Abandon Further Development of Large Hydropower*

Since the inception of the energy generation through hydro power projects the Himalayan region is the hot spot for the power generation through mega and micro hydroelectric projects, particularly since early 1950's with the Bhakhra Dam. Since then dozens of Big Dams built throughout the state of Himachal Pradesh. With the growing urge of the energy the region by the industries the Himalayan region exploited very unscientifically for the energy generation. On one side; this model of development devastating the biodiversity and wild life at the same time put the community livelihood and sustainability in dangers.

There are more than 1000 tunnel based dams and hydro-electric projects either proposed to be built, under construction or completed across all the 11 Himalayan states. Sanctions have been given individually without any thought to the cumulative effect the proposed tunnel based dams will have on an eco-fragile region which is still evolving geographically. With these 'Run-of-the-river' power projects scheduled to be built on all existing rivers, these river systems would no longer flow freely, affecting communities and ecology alike – near the rivers and further downstream. State governments in their eagerness to become energy rich states have ignored their own communities whose livelihoods depend completely on the natural resources available and live sustainably.

In the state of Himachal Pradesh the maximum thrust to generate power has been emphasized on the Satluj Basin. The Satluj River originates from Tibet and enters India from Khab in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh. Out of 250 Kilo Meters basin in Himachal, India up to Bhakhara Dam, 150 Kilo Meters stretch of Satluj is in Kinnaur which has been and proposed to be completely dammed and the river will flow through tunnels. We will not able to see Satluj flowing in its natural course in future.

The Satluj enters Shimla, Kullu, Mandi and Bilaspur district up to Bhakhara Dam for next 100 Kilo Meters stretch from where it has been canalized and supplying water to Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Rajasthan and Delhi. Bhakhara dam was built in sixties and after that Satluj does not flow in its natural basin to Arabic sea. Bhakhara Dam impounded 20290 Acres of Forest land and 23863 Acres of Agriculture land of Bilaspur district only in sixties. This project submerged land up to Lathiani in Una district and Mandi. The dam submerged 371 villages and Bilaspur town where 7,206 families of 36000 population lived as per revenue record having land/house ownership, whereas land less are not being recorded. Same happened in Beas Satluj Link project which is first river linking project was executed in seventies. Displaced of Bhakhra and Beas projects are still not being resettled and R&R is pending even after 60 years.

2. *Keep Himalayas Free from Subsidy and Incentive Driven Mining and Industrialisation*

The total Gross State Domestic Product of the Pradesh at current prices is estimated at Rs 85,841 crore in 2013-14 as against Rs 76,259 crore in 2012-13, thereby registering an increase of 12.6 percent. The structural composition of the state economy witnessed significant changes during the decade. The share of agriculture including horticulture and animal husbandry in G.S.D.P. had declined from 21.1 percent in 2000-01 to 14.25 percent in 2013-14 while the Secondary sector contribution increased from 26.5 per cent in 1990-91 to 37.87 percent in 2013-14.

This shift has occurred because of irrational incentives and we take the lower figure of the companies which have already come in and just take the component of "Capital Subsidy" which has a ceiling of Rs 30 lakhs only, it comes to a whopping Rs 2000 crores. Of course, despite these being called back-ended subsidies which are given after the investments have been made we all know that several more would have claimed and the figure could be as high as Rs 5000 crores or that is what the government is already committed to dole out to the companies. This is an outright give away in cash. Thus for an investment of Rs 6500 crores if industrialists get back Rs 5000 crores in cash what is the need for such industrialization. It is not that the rest of the money invested is not guaranteed

to shower more returns. The tax holidays will add to an enormous amount over this as excise duty and income tax alone will be 40 percent of the gross profits. Few specific companies themselves have reported turnovers of Rs 1000 crores. But even if we take a conservative estimate of Ra 5000 crores, another Rs 2000 crores is given away as tax concessions.

The process of robbing itself and the community to pay investors and promoters is not new or isolated to the industrial sector alone. The infrastructural back up of power is provided with another package of concessions. However, the utility in the State is bleeding hundreds of crores.

It is therefore clear that the process of dispossessing people of their land and other natural resources and depriving them of many constitutionally guaranteed rights and curtailing institutions of local self-governance is covertly and overtly being undertaken by the State in the name of liberalization, privatization and it is being conveniently spoken about as the inevitability of globalization. Almost all river segments and over 50,000 ha of prime land and other natural resources including forests, mineral resources and even cheap human resources are being sacrificed at this alter of globalisation.

B. Increase Resilience and Adaptive Capacity

1. Enhancing observational and monitoring network

One of the most crucial needs and gap areas is the availability of reliable and authentic data on the Himalayan Ecosystem. The systematic collection of data and information about the Himalayan mountain system is critical for improved understanding of climate change, and its trends and impacts, and for predicting future scenario. Data and information derived from earth observation are proving increasingly vital for gaining insights about regional status and trends, especially about climatic and broader environmental changes, and their implications at the global level. Earth observation information products and services are essential for determining adaptation strategies and appropriate development interventions for the benefit of mountain communities in the HKH region. Earth observation has a special significance in this region, with its high degree of inaccessibility and severe weather conditions.

The use of remote sensing data and techniques and geographic information system (GIS) data, complemented by field verification, is an effective method for the mapping and inventorying of glaciers in the region. These methods are continuously improving and converging so that it becomes increasingly easy to compare and exchange data worldwide. It is vital to adequately augment the initiatives for long-term ecological and weather monitoring across the region so as to address the issue of knowledge gaps.

2. Seed Management

Like other parts of India, Himalayas also stored thousands of varieties of seeds of cereals, millets, pulses, vegetables, fruits, flowers etc. Owing to its difficult terrain, Himalayan agricultural fields did

not experience green revolution in 1960s-70s, and were able to protect the rich variety of seeds. Post 1980s like most other places farmers in Himalayas also moved away from the practice of saving and exchanging seeds with their neighbors and families, to buying seeds from the market and slowly their own indigenous knowledge systems related to farming and seed saving slowly became irrelevant. Result — crop diversity suffered. In a land that once had thousands varieties of rice, it is difficult to find anything outside a few popular varieties in the markets today. Fortunately owning to the harsh terrain, Himalayan region still have more biodiverse farming than any other part of India.

As weather systems are becoming more and more unpredictable, there is arising an urgent need of seeds that are more robust and are able to survive the uncertainty in the weather pattern. The seeds that have evolved over thousands of years of farming are most likely to survive weather anomalies. It would be critical at this point to create seed banks of local indigenous varieties of seeds to save them from extinction; their loss could be an absolute loss of genetic diversity in Himalayan agriculture and would be an end to any further research on indigenous varieties.

Currently farmers are highly dependent on market for seeds and are sometimes dictated by markets forces to choose certain kind of seeds or to pay higher prices. To protect farmers from this cycle, agriculture extension services can institutionalize the seed banks under the ownership of farmers. Extension service should not only popularize local seeds, but also work towards research in local varieties that are more robust.

3. *Crop diversification*

Population pressures coupled with recent changes in socio-cultural change from subsistence to market economy has resulted in farmers emphasizing on cash crop. It also means replacement of staple food crops by cash crops and of multipurpose agroforestry trees by fruit trees. This fact corroborated by primary data, which revealed more and more farmers moving to cash crops and monoculture farming. In addition, in Himachal Pradesh and J&K extension of agricultural land is through replacement diverse forests by apple orchards. Simultaneously, Improvement in accessibility and supply of staple food grains at subsidized price by the government means that farmers have benefitted financially from growing cash crops. That said, loss of agro biodiversity means more risks to local livelihood in the wake of fall in market price/ demand, termination of government subsidy on staple foods, less diverse food basket, pest outbreak in a cash crop dominated landscape and climate changes induced variability. As we notices from esearch that most of the farmers in the study area were suffering pest and wild animal attack, which means direct loss in total income. Increased application of fertilizers temporarily leads to higher production but at high input costs and more resilient pests. Increasing agro biodiversity using crop diversification and economic benefits from non-timber forests produce can increase resilience of mountain communities and check degradation of forests. Farmers in the hill are known to grow a variety of crops triggered by a sense of securing survival in isolated settlements in a highly variable and uncertain biophysical environment. High level of crop yields (e.g. 6.5 t ha^{-1} of wheat and 14 t ha^{-1} of potato) and food sufficiency in many villages insulated from external forces due to extreme inaccessibility (Chandrasekhar 2003, Semwal *et al*. 2003a) testify the potential of indigenous knowledge. It is thus suggested that policies and incentives favoring Indigenous innovations such as cultivation of medicinal plant and native varieties of staple food crops and traditional practices to cope up with the variability and uncertainty arising due to changing climate.

4. *Alternative Livelihoods*

The majority of people in the Himalayas depend on subsistence agriculture and natural resources for their livelihoods. However, traditional agriculture no longer serves as a sufficient livelihood option fulfilling the needs of most mountain communities. In recent years, economic growth, shifting population dynamics, and climate change have taken place so rapidly and intensely that the vulnerability of mountain farming communities have increased manifolds. The changing global environment and societal changes mean that opportunities need to be generated locally for mountain people to strengthen and adapt niche product and service systems to tackle the chronic and growing poverty.

The Himalayan region are endowed with an extensive variety of high value, low volume products, such as non-timber forest products (NTFPs), medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs), and honeybee products, and are suitable for cultivating temperate and off-season crops. However, the primary producers and collectors of these products generally receive a relatively low share of the returns due to insufficient knowledge of market chains, lack of processing facilities, inadequate quality control, and similar factors. The same holds true for mountain tourism, which, despite its enormous potential within the region, not only remains largely underdeveloped, but also rarely benefits the local population in the form of sustainable and non-exploitive employment and supply of services and local products. Despite the relevance for mountain people's livelihoods, and the quick growth of trade in NTFPs and MAPs, national and regional policies have not been adequately developed, adapted, or implemented in the region. There is significant scope to generate more income locally by supporting mountain people to generate new livelihood options and add value to high value products and services.

Using a combination of indigenous knowledge and modern scientific knowledge, new avenues of livelihood could be generated from existing resources and provide much needed economic security to the mountain communities. Additionally, a supportive role by local cooperative, government agencies, civil society organizations etc can provide technical knowhow, credit, market linkages and insurance to the communities and create a diversified livelihood scenario.

B. REPORT OF THE STATE LEVEL CONFERENCE

Climate Justice Impacts, Threats and Way Forward
In Himalayan Region and Role of Local Self Governance Institutions
21st Nov.2015
At Reckong Peo District kinnaur
Himachal Pradesh

Total Participants: **300**
Total No. of Organization participated all over the state – **43**
Total No. of organizations participated from National level – **7**
Duration of the Event – **1 day**

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The Himalayas are not just a mere range of mountains, but the source of our very existence and survival. They are the source of some of the largest river-systems and basins in the world, which provides our country with 60% of its water requirement. Himalayan region contains the great Indo-Gangetic alluvial plain which is known as the 'grain basket of South Asia'. Their thick forests have been able to reduce carbon emissions by over 20%, being a key factor in mitigating and controlling climate change. Himalayas is the reason why we have been getting our bountiful monsoons every year on which the survival of the rest of India depends. Himalayan region contains states of diverse cultures and communities. This is one of the few places where culturally diverse communities live with their lives and livelihood intricately woven with nature. It also play very crucial role in the ecological balance in the world.

Since the inception of the energy generation through hydro power projects the Himalayan region is the hot spot for the power generation through mega and micro hydro electric project. In the state this started in the early 1950's with the Bhakhra Dam. Since then dozens of Big Dams have been built throughout the state of Himachal Pradesh. With the growing urge of the energy by the industries the Himalayan region is being exploited very unscientifically for the energy generation. This model of development while devastating the biodiversity and wild life at the same time endangers the community livelihood and sustainability.

There are more than 1000 tunnel based dams and hydro-electric projects either proposed to be built, under construction or completed across all the 11 Himalayan states. Sanctions have been given individually without any thought to the cumulative effect the proposed tunnel based dams will have on an eco-fragile region which is still evolving geographically. With these 'Run-of-the-river' power projects scheduled to be built on all existing rivers, these river systems would no longer flow freely, affecting communities and ecology alike – near the rivers and further downstream. State governments in their eagerness to become energy rich states have ignored their own communities whose livelihoods depend completely on the natural resources available and live sustainably.

The impacts of climate change in the Himalayas are real. Melting glaciers, erratic and unpredictable weather conditions, changing rainfall patterns, and increasing temperatures are impacting on the people and wildlife of the region.

The Himalayas is one of the world's most sensitive hotspots to global climate change, with impacts manifesting at a particularly rapid rate. It is predicted to intensify in coming years; with dire and far-reaching impacts on food, water and energy security, as well as biodiversity including species loss. Not just in the Himalayas, but throughout Asia.

A significant threat posed by Climate Change in the Himalayas is the continual formation of large number of glacial lakes. The Lakes consist of vast quantities of glacial melt water held in place by natural dams of stone and rubble. The enhanced rate at which the snow and ice is melting means that the water accumulating in these lakes is increasing rapidly. And if the natural rubble dams holding back the water break, a tsunami of water, mud, ice and stone is swept down the valley. Such events can have devastating consequences to infrastructure and local communities; washing away roads, bridges, houses, people, livestock and crops.

At the Global level to meet with the challenges the developed countries are on the global event do not committing any positive steps to combat the situation but trying to divert the whole discussion and steps to the developing countries, on the other hand the developing countries like India are continuing with their developmental goals and enhancing the threats of climate change. The major players responsible for the climate change are coming with false technological solutions are trying to divert the discussion of real time measures.

Thus at this time we really need to carry forward the awareness campaigns and continue to push the real time measures to be taken by the major players so we could combat the threats of climate change.

Himalayan region fragile and steep mountainous area and is landslide prone because of its geological formation. The Greater Himalayan region never faced rains in summer in the past but now it is new phenomena that heavy rains, landslide and flash flood has become permanent feature because heavy construction, tunnelling and impoundments by these projects at local level and at large due to global climate change. Glaciers are receding rapidly in the catchments. Human habitats particularly traditional villages are not settled on the river banks but at upper reaches of mountains because of the steep gradients. Some villages are sliding and one of them has been vacated and settled somewhere else because of tunnelling beneath the village. Springs have dried up and huge deforestation and degradation of grass land has taken place already. Endangered species of Chilgoza (*pinus gerardina*), Devdar (*cedrus deodhara*) trees and many other high altitude flora and fauna are being destroyed by these mega projects which is also base of local livelihoods for farming and pastoral community. Agriculture and apple orchards are also under threat. Local people lose their traditional livelihoods and traditional control over community resources which were well established. The area comes under seismic zone 4 and 5 and has faced hundreds of earthquakes in last one century.

In the state, local organizations are struggling for the sustainable development and ecological sustainability with protection to the livelihood of communities in the Himalayan region. The core issues to be addressed in the consultation are:

1. Development , Ecology and community sustainability
2. Energy demand and possible alternatives of energy generation
3. Chalk out the strategy to combat the Climate Change in Himalayan Region.

PROCEEDINGS

A Seminar on climate justice was organised at Reckong Peo on 21 November 2015 at Bachat Bhawan in which over 300 participants from local Kinnaura tribal community gathered. Mr. R S Negi local leader of Him Lok Jagriti Manch raised the issues of ecological and environment losses induced by the destruction caused by rampant installation of Mega Hydro projects in the Satluj basin. Damming, construction, tunnelling and heavy traffic has destabilised the fragile mountain range and adversely impacted the climate of this range of Greater Himalaya. Local community is facing lose of livelihoods, landslides has increased due to which agriculture and horticulture land has been washed away. The region which is a Himalayan cold desert is now facing heavy rains. Due to this destruction, region has faced heavy flash flood in the year 2013-14 which caused huge loses of life and property. More than two hundred Mega and micro hydro projects heaving about 9000 Megawatt capacity has been installed in this Satluj valley. While power is being catered to urban centres like Delhi and to National grid, where as we are pushed to face negative impact of climate change and disasters.

R Sreedhar presented the Cumulative Impact Assessment study on upper Satluj Basin which was conducted jointly by Himalaya Niti Abhiyan, Him Lok Jagriti Manch and Environics Trust in the year 2014-15. He said that unscientific road construction, tunneling and damming has aggravated landslide, slips and soil erosion in Himachal Pradesh and somehow negatively impact on the local climate and ecology. The recent incident at Dwada near Hanogi on NH 21 is not the only example of landslide in the state. Urni, near Soongra on NH, Lippa, Jhakhri, Pangi villages and many other places in Kinnaur has faced landslides in recent years, which are the result of construction of roads, tunnelling and damming in which heavy blasting material was used. On the other hand the mega investment in cement, Hydro power, four lane project and mining are adversely affecting the ecological balance and simultaneously grabbing the private and common land thus depriving the hilly society from the resources at large. These projects are not only affecting the local economy adversely but playing major role in climate change and local weather condition.

Guman Singh raised the issue of destruction of Himalayan region due to corporate loot induced on the name of development. All rivers and streams have been dammed for power generation, whereas heavy industries have been installed in downstream region of the Himalaya. This has marginalised local community, destroyed bio diversity, enhanced deforestation and dried water springs due to which local weather patrons has changed. Mining for cement, construction material and major mineral is defacing Himalaya. This destruction as increased the temperature of the region, erratic weather patron, flash floods, droughts and human induced natural disasters. After the globalization the scale of plundering of these common resources increased but these private companies failed to generate the employment accordingly, even the opportunities of the employment squeezing and gradually decreasing.

Guman Singh released discussion note on Local self governance and Himalayan development perspective document on the event.

Dharm Chand Yadav presented document on forest right act and released second issue of Himalaya Ki Awas an occassional publication of Himalaya Niti abhiyan.

Sandeep Minhas presented the declaration on climate justice in this seminar.

Ranjit Singh Negi pointed out the threats Kinnaura's are facing due to hydro projects. He discussed about the group formed by the State Government on Cumulative impact assessment for Satluj river basin overlooking the people's concerns. He emphasised how there was no consultation at local level. They are functioning from Shimla and trying to bring the report in the favour of the project thus our concerns are ignored. He demanded

- Area above 7000ft be declared as eco-sensitive zone and construction of hydro power projects above 7000 ft be completely banned.
- No hydro power projects be sanctioned in Kinnaur district without obtaining NOC from Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, GoI.
- No hydro electric project be sanctioned near sensitive and important glaciers and sensitive land slides.
- The riparian distance between two projects should not be less than 5 Km.
- Environmental flow from the dam should not be less than 25% in all seasons.
- For construction of underground tunnel blasting must be banned and TBM be used.

At the end the gathering issued a statement on climate justice in solidarity with global actions. After the seminar Copies of studies, declaration, and statements were submitted to the Government through Deputy Commissioner Kinnaur.

The Climate Justice Yatra was thus launched.

C. CLIMATE JUSTICE YATRA

As we all are aware that without mobilizing the communities at local level the major players of climate change shall not discuss the real issues and will come with false solutions and unethical resolutions on climate change they will not come with real time solutions and change in the developmental process. Considering the fact Himalaya Niti Abhiyan after the Reckong peo Conference on **Climate Justice Impacts, Threats and Way Forward In Himalayan Region and Role of Local Self Governance Institutions** organised 15 day long campaign in all district of the state (District, Block, Sub Division level) in the state of Himachal Pradesh to aware and mobilize the communities on the real issues of Climate Justice and Local Self Governance. During the Campaign (Yatra) which is from 22nd Nov 2015 to 5th Dec 2015 the Hiamlaya Niti Abhiyan Team visited all district Head quarters, Blocks, Sub Division, and did Nukkad Sabha's (Local Gathering) Seminars, Leaflet. Pamphlet Distribution and meeting with administrations followed by the press conferences.

COMMUNITY MOBILASATION

Date: 22nd Nov 2015

Place : Rampur & Luhari

Activities:

1. Public Meeting
2. Leaflet and Pamphlet Distribution
3. Press Conference

Date: 23rd Nov 2015

Place: Shimla (State Capital of Himachal Pradesh)

Activities:

1. Public Meeting
2. State Level Press Conference
3. Leaflet and Pamphlet Distribution in General Public
4. Public Announcement

Date: 24th & 25th November 2015

Place: Villages of Bilaspur district

Activities:

1. Village level Meetings in 15 villages
2. Interaction with public representatives
3. Leaflet and pamphlet distribution
4. Meeting with Bhakhra Dam affected

Date: 30th Nov 2015

Place: Kullu

Activities:

1. Public meeting
2. Public Announcement
3. Distribution of Leaflet
4. Press Conference

Date: 29th Nov 2015

Place: Balichowki, Aut & Manali

Activities:

Public Meeting

1. Seminar on Climate Justice and Release of Declaration on Climate Justice in the seminar followed by Press conference

Date: 30th Nov 2015

Place: Kullu

Activities:

1. Public meeting
2. Public Announcement
3. Distribution of Leaflet

People
5. Core issues raised and discussed with district Administration

Date: 26th November 2015

Place: Villages of Mandi and Bilaspur Districts

Activities:

1. Meeting with four lane affected people
2. Village Level meetings
3. Meeting with district administration, forest officers and revenue officers
4. Distribution of Pamphlet and leaflet in general

Date: 27th November 2015

Place: Janjheli, Chatri

Activities:

1. Public Meetings
2. Press conference
3. Leaflet distribution

Date: 28th Nov 2015

Place Bajar, Gadagushaini & Gushaini

Activities:

1. Public Meetings
2. Leaflet distribution
3. Community mobilization
4. Press Conference

Date: 29th Nov 2015

Place: Balichowki, Aut & Manali

Activities:

1. Public Meeting
2. Seminar on Climate Justice and Release of Declaration on Climate Justice in the seminar followed by Press conference
4. Press Conference

Date: 30th Nov 2015

Place: Kullu

Activities:

1. Public meeting
2. Public Announcement
3. Distribution of Leaflet
4. Press Conference

Date: 1st December 2015

Place: Mandi & Palampur

Activities:

1. Press conference
2. Public meeting
3. Distribution of leaflets

Date: 2nd December 2015

Place: Knagra & Sinhuta

Activities:

1. Public Meetings
2. Press Conferences

Date: 3rd December 2015

Place: Garnota

Activities:

1. Seminar on climate Justice and Local Self governance
2. Public Announcement
3. Meeting with Administration

Date: 4th December 2015

Place: Jadera Chamba

Activities:

1. Public Meeting
2. Press Conference
3. Distribution of pamphlets and leaflets

Series of Photos of Semina rs and Public Gatherings:

CONCLUDING SEMINAR AT CHAMBA

Closing seminar was organized at chamba on 5th of November 2015 in which 300 local including representative of Gaddi and Gujjar tribal also participated. Kulbhushan Upmanyu, President of Himalay Niti Abhiyan presented the issues of climate crisis in Himalaya due to destructive profit oriented model of so called development. He stress on Himalayan specific development framework based on geo-physical and ecological realities of the region. Himalayan development policy shall be decided at the central level considering environmental protection and conservation of livelihoods of mountain communities at the core. Guman Singh said that grabbing of common by corporate, hydro project, tunneling, mega construction, industries, mining and damming are the factors for depletion of forest cover, pollution and climate change in Himalaya. The gathering was also addressed by Man Singh, Vishal Deep, Ajit Rathor and Dhara chand Yadav.

Seminar endorsed the declaration released at Reckong peo on 21 Nov 2015