
Initiative 4: Himalayan Popular Lecture Series

Admiring actions & opinions for sustainable development of IHR ...

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Background

The Himalaya is a world within itself, which represents a highly heterogeneous environment and great diversity of landscapes, cultures, traditions, and climatic variability of highest order. Understanding of such a diverse system requires views, actions, opinions, experiences, and observations of a wide cross-section of the people who have lived and worked in/for Himalaya and

are familiar with the grandeur, mythology, traditions, the inherent sanctity and fragility of this diverse challenging environment, also known as 'Abode of Gods'. This understanding requires knowledge of many other things beyond the wisdom of science and the logic that appertains to celestial, divine and the occult – a perception to discern the substance in the myth. There are large number of outstanding scholars, practitioners, renowned specialists,

Box 2

We admire individuals' abilities, aspirations and passion for environment & development and our research combines scientific excellence, outstanding technical ability and people's concern for nature

grassroots-level workers, scientists, artists, activists, planners and community leaders in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR). However, their competences are not utilized for the welfare of IHR in the desired way. Admiring their actions and opinions for the development of IHR, this lecture series focuses to debate and discuss some pertinent, thought-provoking and inspirational issues that can play a key role in sustainable development of the region. In order to facilitate the free-flow of their diverse knowledge-base and to harness the intellectual growth, G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development (GBPIHED) has initiated a "Himalayan Popular Lecture Series" to advance general understanding on environment & development and other significant issues in the contemporary interests of the IHR.

Box 1

Intellectual growth should commence at birth and cease only at death.

- Einstein

The general structure of the popular lecture series would be to deliver a keynote address in a popular language on a contemporary topic by an identified invited lead speaker, followed by an extensive discussion. A question-answer and knowledge/data-sharing session would be promoted during the course of each lecture. The lecture should have high relevance to the IHR, must provide a rapid turn-around on the subject with potential for disseminating the information freely to all researchers, workers, policy planners and other users.

Box 3

Human and Wildlife Conflicts

Human and wildlife conflict is much debated in recent times as it poses a major threat to survival of many wild animal species in different parts of the world. At the same time, it has also acted as a significant threat to local human populations. Considering the importance of the subject in IHR, the first popular lecture of this series was organised on 15th May 2014 at GBPIHED-HQs, Almora. The keynote was delivered by Dr. S.S. Garbyal, DG (Forests) & Special Secretary, MoEF, Govt of India. The discussion highlighted the major policy initiatives that need to be taken up to handle this alarming issue.

1st Himalayan Popular Lecture

The Institute foresees to organize such lectures all across the length and breadth of IHR to explore diverse faces and features of popular issues that affect general livelihood resources and environment of IHR. It would also address case studies from all over the country in general and Himalayan region, in particular.

Based on the R&D needs as well as challenges in context of the IHR, a committee comprising faculty and staff of GBPIHED will select topics of high relevance to the region along with prospective speakers for sparking discussion and exchange of ideas and wisdom. The lectures are open to cover wider audience; primarily the research staff and faculty along with students and members of the general public would be given preference.

The outcomes

The Institute envisages that the popular lecture series will generate several new ideas and Vision for research and developmental agencies in the IHR. Furthermore, it will encourage researchers, development workers and policy planners to use the knowledge and information for upgrading their abilities to reason clearly, communicate & interact respectfully, explore critically & creatively, and act responsibly. Going forward, it will not only increase visibility and impacts of popular work of the speakers but also disseminate the knowledge to a wider global community.

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