



National Consultation on Gender and Climate Change in the Indian Himalayan Region

24th July 2014

Background Note

The Context

India is one of the signatories of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Government of India launched a National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) in 2008 outlining eight national missions. These Missions form the core of NAPCC (Solar; Sustainable Habitats; Water Mission; Green India Mission; Strategic Knowledge; Sustainable Agriculture; Enhanced Energy Efficiency and Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem), with a focus on promoting understanding of Climate Change, adaptation and mitigation, energy efficiency and natural resource conservation. In order to facilitate the implementation of the NAPCC, each state has been asked to formulate a State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) that takes into account the local conditions, yet reflects the core aims and principles of the NAPCC. The NAPCC and SAPCCs together address a wide spectrum of themes and issues related to climate change, natural resources conservation and sustainable development. Although they recognize gender as a significant issue, there is a need to build in the critically important gender perspective which requires the plans and activities explicitly integrate gender concerns and priorities into their thematic approach. It also calls for the integration of women in activities for planning, management and implementation, as well as audit of climate actions at all levels.

The Study

Recognizing the need to integrate gender within the frameworks of the climate action and adaptation plans and the greater vulnerability of the Indian Himalayan Region and its people, given its fragile ecological context, IUCN India is conducting a short study titled 'Gender and Climate Change in the Indian Himalayan Region'. This study aims to capture the current status of women vis-a-vis climate change impacts, their potential role in adapting to climate change and seek to briefly assess the understanding and engagement of actors responsible for the formulation and implementation of the climate agenda regarding gender concerns and approaches adopted to integrate gender in the climate agenda at various levels. The study, it is expected, will present an analysis of policy options for the same, and is being conducted for the Indian Himalaya Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

Three Himalayan states have been selected to be the focus of this study namely, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim. Each of these states has in place a State level Action Plan to address the issue of Climate Change. The study analyses the proposed plans, and likely impacts from a gender and equity perspective based on available documents and research work. The research includes interviews with lead stakeholders at the state level; focus group discussions held with women from rural communities in these states providing preliminary insights into their understanding, engagement and perceptions on the issue; and providing valuable inputs to design a gender inclusive approach and strategies to cope and adapt to climate change in the Himalayan region of India, given its particular vulnerability.



The National Consultation is part of a series of consultations previously held at State level in the three states where the study was conducted. IUCN is organizing this Consultation in collaboration with the Department of Science & Technology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India, and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) under the Indian Himalaya Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP). It will bring together an array of participants and stakeholders, to deliberate the issue, discuss the key conclusions of the study, share insights and define strategies to strengthen the integration of gender agenda in climate actions and initiatives at all levels. The expected outcomes of this National Consultation are as follows:

- To underline and enhance the significance of gender and equity in Climate Change vulnerability and adaptation strategies;
- To identify key strategies for stakeholders for interventions at grassroots and policy level.

We hope that the Consultation will provide an opportunity to create synergies for collaboration and action towards engendering the climate discourse and actions thereof, in the Indian Himalayan Region.

About the organizers of the Consultation

The Department of Science & Technology, Ministry of Science & Technology has been entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating two out of eight national missions launched under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC). These are, the National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE) and National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change (NMSKCC). The broad objectives of NMSHE include - understanding of the complex processes affecting the Himalayan Ecosystem and evolve suitable management and policy measures for sustaining and safeguarding the Himalayan eco-system, creating and building capacities in different domains, networking of knowledge institutions engaged in research and development of a coherent data base on Himalayan ecosystem, detecting and decoupling natural and anthropogenic induced signals of global environmental changes in mountain ecosystems, studying traditional knowledge systems for community participation in adaptation, mitigation and coping mechanisms inclusive of farming and traditional health care systems and developing regional cooperation with neighboring countries, to generate a strong data base through monitoring and analysis, to eventually create a knowledge base for policy interventions.

Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) is a project under Global Programme Climate Change (GPCC) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). IHCAP is being implemented as a bilateral cooperation programme with Department of Science & Technology. IHCAP builds on capacity and knowledge enhancement related to three pillars-- scientific and technical knowledge cooperation between Indian and Swiss scientific institutions; adaptation measures for vulnerable communities; and mainstreaming adaptation policies for improved action in the Indian Himalayan Region.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), a leading organization on the environment and sustainable development, has been committed to gender equality and equity since 1948. Its efforts are Union wide and an integral part of all policies, programmes and projects. Prior to the UNFCCC Conference held in Bali, Indonesia, in 2007, representatives of IUCN, UNDP, and WEDO came together to address this emerging issue of gender and climate change, resulting in the formation of the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA), launched at the 13th Conference of Parties held in Bali. The GGCA works to ensure that climate change policies, decision making, and initiatives at the global, regional, and national levels are gender responsive.