

## **A Brief Report on the Celebration of International Day for Biological Diversity, 2013 by Sikkim State biodiversity Board**

The United Nations has proclaimed May 22 as the International Day for Biological Diversity (IBD) to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues in a meeting of the UN General Assembly in December 2000. The theme for IBD 2013 was “Water and Biodiversity”.

With a view to generate awareness on biodiversity issues and help people understand the importance of water and biodiversity for sustainable development, Sikkim State Biodiversity Board (SSBB) organized various programs as a part of the celebration of the International Day for Biological Diversity (IBD) 2013 involving Government and Non-Governmental Organizations, Schools, Biodiversity Management Committees (BMC) and public. The celebrations were conducted at nine different places across the state. During the inaugural a book on “Watering Biodiversity, Ecosystem Management” authored by Dr. Balakrishna Pisupati Chairperson, NBA and a pamphlet on the “Significance of International Biodiversity Day” by the Sikkim State Biodiversity Board in Nepali were distributed to the government functionaries, NGOs and public.

The program was well publicized by news media, a message of Hon’ble Chief Minister, who is also the Chairman of the Board, was flashed in the local English and Nepali newspapers on 22nd May 2013. In addition to that, several other local newspapers addressed the theme and covered the programs conducted at different venues.

During the program Importance of Water and Biodiversity, related threats, the impact of climate change, conservation needs and efforts at the regional, national and international levels were highlighted by several speakers. Power point presentation were made by teachers/forest officials/NGOs and research institutes. Competitions on Model exhibits, Quiz and Essay writing were conducted for school and college students and winners were awarded with prizes. Group discussion, Interactive sessions and Rally with slogans was also organized.

The details of celebrations in nine places are as follows:

1. A day long program was organized at Namchi, South Sikkim in coordination with the Forest Department, a NGO named Sikkim Paryavaran Samrakshan Sangh (SPSS) and the Phung Secondary School.
2. IBD 2013 was celebrated at Lingi Govt. Senior Secondary School with the active support of Lingi-Payong BMC, Zilla Panchayat member and villagers. Payong Junior High School, Karjee Junior High School and Sokpay Junior High School also participated in the celebration.
3. IBD Celebration also took place at Central Pendam Senior Secondary School, East Sikkim. The Pendam BMC in collaboration with The Mountain Institute India, Forest Department organized a day long Awareness and Education Program on the theme.
4. An awareness-raising program stressing on Water and Biodiversity, their significance and the conservation needs was organized at the Hee Patal Junior High School in West Sikkim with the concerted efforts of the BMC of Hee Bermiok, school staff, Forest Department and the State Biodiversity Board.
5. IBD 2013 was observed at Kitam, South Sikkim with the involvement of the BMC Kitam, Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of Sikkim.
6. IBD was also celebrated at the Himalayan Zoological Park, Bulbulay, Gangtok with the help & support of Forest Department and WWF-Sikkim. Two Schools of Gangtok namely Deorali Girls Senior Secondary and Tadong Senior Secondary were selected for participation in this celebration.
7. The IDB 2013 celebration also took place at Govt. Secondary School, Lingchom, West Sikkim with the support of Territorial, Wildlife, Env. & Soil Conservation and Social Forestry DFOs of West Sikkim.
8. Quiz and essay competitions were also organized for the students of Sikkim Government College, Gangtok as a part of the IDB celebration 2013 with the active support of Forest Department. The topic for essay competition was “Traditional practices and local knowledge regarding water conservation in Sikkim” and was circulated amongst the students in advance.
9. IBD 2013 was also celebrated at the Auditorium Hall of Mangan Senior Secondary School, North Sikkim with the active support of the Territorial Forest Division, North.