

ICIMOD Knowledge Park at Godavari

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

Spread over 30 hectares of land given to ICIMOD by the Government of Nepal in the early 1990s the ICIMOD Knowledge Park at Godavari attracts 5,000-plus visitors per year from all walks of life to learn about new technologies and practices for sustainable land use and natural resource management in hill areas of the greater Himalayan region. Typical visitors to the park include students, farmers, government officials, development practitioners, researchers, and entrepreneurs. However, everybody is welcome to visit.

The park operates on the concept that ‘seeing is believing’. Accordingly, it has been designed as an open space for demonstrating renewable energy technologies, water management, vegetation management, soil management, income generation (vegetables, fruits, livestock, fish, beekeeping, etc.), biodiversity conservation, ecotourism, and research and support for replication and/or upscaling by visitors and partners alike.

The technologies, approaches, and practices showcased in the park can be described as climate friendly, ‘green’, or low carbon. ICIMOD promotes their use through demonstration, hands-on training, and information sharing so that hill communities of the region can use them to not only to adapt to climate change, but also to move towards a greener economy. A carbon monitoring plot in the park, for instance, demonstrates the greenhouse gas-mitigating potential of forests, thereby paving the way for carbon payment under initiatives for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD).

Situated on the north-facing slope of the Pulchowki watershed in Godavari at an elevation of 1,540–1,800 metres, the park comprises mostly mixed deciduous and evergreen broadleaved forests which provide a sanctuary to an estimated 694 floral species, including 35 varieties of orchids, and 231 faunal species, including 97 species of butterflies and 88 species of birds. Rich in ecosystem services, it boasts four mini watersheds and 12 mini sub-catchments within the main Phulchowki watershed. The climate is subtropical to warm temperate, and the mean annual rainfall is 2,004 mm, with 80 per cent of total annual precipitation occurring between June and September.

The park houses an Information Centre where visitors can learn about ICIMOD’s Regional Programmes and Thematic Areas through publications and videos. It also hosts a Green Shop where visitors can buy organic vegetables, fruits, fish and other products, depending on the season.



Demonstrated technologies, approaches, and practices

Type of activity	Examples
Renewable energy technologies	Solaqua solar still; Puxin biogas plant; pico hydropower-peltric set technology; hydroram water pump; cycle water pump; beehive biobriquetting technology; cool chamber; trombe walls
Water management	Natural spring water harvesting; rooftop rain water harvesting; drip and sprinkler irrigation; treadle water pump; water collection ponds
Agricultural technologies/ soil management techniques	Agroforestry; sloping agricultural land technology (SALT); green manure/mulching; composting techniques; polypit and hotbeds; bio-pesticides and plant tonics; cucumber and tomato (including grafting) cultivation with integrated pest management packages
Income generation activities	Animal husbandry; rainbow trout farming; beekeeping; kiwi fruit growing; cultivation of high-value medicinal and aromatic plants; shitake mushroom; broom grass; bamboo management; floriculture
Ecotourism	Two nature trails; birdwatching walks; possibility of homestays in nearby villages
Support functions and research	Nursery; meteorological station; transboundary air pollution station; soil erosion monitoring; biomass study; carbon monitoring

Core services

Standard guided tour: The guided tour entails a briefing about the park, its history, activities, issues, and challenges, as well as a leisurely walk through the woods. Visitors learn about the various technologies, approaches, and practices appropriate for sustainable natural resource management and livelihood enhancement in hill areas of the greater Himalayan region. There are two tour options to choose from: short (1 hour) and long (1½ hours).

Training and educational outreach: ICIMOD welcomes formal requests for training on any of the topics addressed at the park (see Table) from groups such as farmer groups, community forestry user groups, community-based organizations, social entrepreneurs, development practitioners, and trainers working with farmers. Educational visits are also arranged for school and university groups. The park staff may also be available to conduct training off-site on special request. A small fee for training and educational visits is requested, on a sliding scale.



Nature walk along eco-friendly trails: Two sign-posted eco-friendly trails are designed expressly for the purpose of nature walks inside the park – the short trail (1 hour) and the long trail (2 hours). Both trails climb through the wooded portion of the park and offer spectacular views of the Kathmandu Valley, the surrounding forested hills, and the Himalayan peaks to the north. The nature walk can be combined with birdwatching.

Training/meeting facilities: The park boasts a fully equipped and wifi-connected resource centre suitable for events such as meetings, training session, and workshops. Private companies, non-governmental organizations, diplomatic missions, and cultural groups can rent the facilities to hold their own events. Situated in a quiet and pristine forest environment conducive to learning and team building, the main meeting hall – called 'Hkaka Borazi' after the highest mountain in Myanmar – can seat up to 28 people at a time.

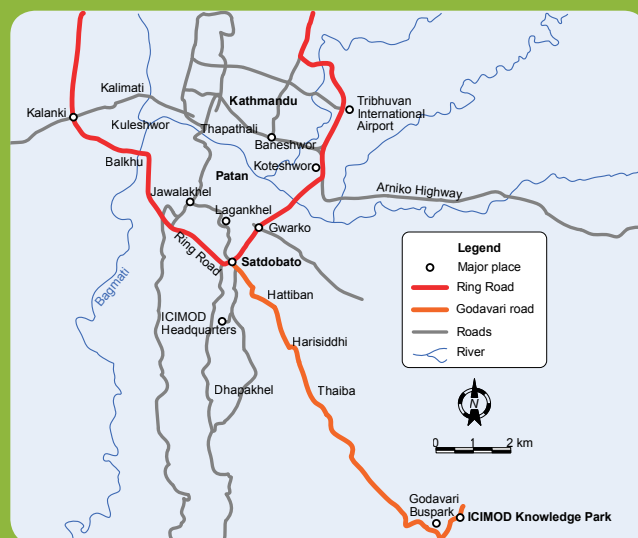
Other attractions in the vicinity

Besides ICIMOD Knowledge Park, there are plenty of things to see in Godavari such as the National Botanical Garden, National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories, Fisheries Research Division, and Godavari Kunda (pond).



Getting there

The park is accessible by public (or micro) bus departing for Godavari from Lagankhel or Satdobato. Parking is available for private vehicles inside the park.



ICIMOD Knowledge Park at Godavari is open to visitor groups Monday through Friday, 10:00 to 15:00, except on national and ICIMOD holidays. Groups are asked to pay a nominal admission fee, with special discounts for students. Individual visits may be possible by special request only.

To book a visit or for any other inquiry, contact

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