

Virtual Tour of Godavari Knowledge Park

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE



Godavari Knowledge Park

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development promotes the replication, upscaling, and dissemination of innovative and sustainable livelihood options, good practices, and appropriate technologies for the sustainable development of mountain areas. A number of such practices and technologies are demonstrated at the Knowledge Park in Godavari, Kathmandu, Nepal, for users to actually see them. Spread over 30 hectares of land, the ICIMOD Knowledge Park in Godavari attracts more than 5,000 visitors every year to learn about new technologies and practices for sustainable land use and natural resource management in hill areas. Typical visitors to the park include students, farmers, government officials, development practitioners, researchers, and entrepreneurs. The park 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), biodiversity conservation, ecotourism, and research and support for replication and/or upscaling by visitors and partners alike.

What is a virtual tour?

A virtual tour is a complete 360 degree view of a space with which a user can interact. When on such a tour, the user will feel as if they are within an area and navigating through it. They have the ability to zoom in and out, and focus on areas of interest.

Rationale behind the Godavari virtual tour application

The Knowledge Park itself can only do so much and go so far in terms of reaching out. Modern information and communication technology has the potential to allow the transfer and sharing of knowledge to more people through a virtual medium. The Godavari Knowledge Park virtual tour has been designed to share knowledge demonstrated at the Park with a large mass of people, even when they cannot visit the location physically. The tour enable users to go through the Park in a web environment and get information on the technologies available there. It could act as a promotional material that attracts more physical visitors to the park. The tour also adds value to the ICIMOD website.



The click-on 'i' symbols open up relevant information boxes

How the virtual tour works

Like any other virtual tour, the Godavari Knowledge Park tour uses a sequence of 360 degree panoramic images of the physical Godavari Knowledge Park, coupled with additional text, videos, and links to further information on the ICIMOD website to capacitate the user and make the content useful and appealing to the audience. The tour package simulates the feeling of actually being present at the Park. Visitors can look around selected locations as they please and explore what is in their vicinity. A table of contents of different technologies demonstrated at the Park is always available on the webpage which means users can jump to a location where the technology they want to explore is hosted. They can move forward or backward, navigating on their own, and seeing and learning from the technologies hosted at the several locations around the Park.

Features of the virtual tour

- Immersive experience of the physical Godavari Knowledge Park with 360 degree panoramic images
- Content made useful and appealing through additional interface which includes text, videos, click-on information boards, and links to information resources
- Detailed visual information on 27 demonstrated technologies (a photograph is worth 1,000 words, a virtual tour is worth 1,000 photographs)
- Interactive navigation at a pace set by the visitor who may select technologies they would like to view
- Can be accessed online from everywhere through a web environment at: <http://www.icimod.org/virtualtour/icimodknowledgepark/index.html>
- Can be viewed offline from a pen drive or local computer drive
- Built to work with all types of platforms using open source technology

A video link gives additional information on kiwi plantation

Acknowledgements

The Godavari virtual tour application was prepared using in-house resources at ICIMOD's Knowledge Management and Communication unit. The first of its kind at ICIMOD, the tour intends to share the vast practical knowledge based at the Godavari Knowledge Park with a wider audience, across the Hindu Kush Himalaya and beyond, especially with those who will not be able to visit Godavari physically. We have used an open source software so that the tour runs across multiple platforms. If needed, our partners can easily adopt this method of communication to their respective circumstances. Developing the virtual tour was a challenging and an iterative task, the success of which would not have been possible had it not been for the teamwork attributable to Akaram Salamani, Amy Sellmyer, Bikash Dangol, Bindiya Manandhar, Deependra Bajracharya, Jeevan Tamang, Samden Sherpa, Samjwal Bajracharya, Sudan Maharjan, Sushil Pandey, and very importantly, Jitendra Bajracharya, our in-house photographer and photo editor, who took the videos and 360 degree images.

The Way Forward

Because the platform is extensible, we will continue to add more technologies demonstrated at the Godavari Knowledge Park to the tour so as to enrich it in terms of content. We are also constantly looking at ways to improve the interface. With the tour providing insight into the Knowledge Park, we expect users will become more engaged, aware, and perhaps even inspired to visit in person.

Solar technologies on display—the information board at the back can be zoomed in on and the information on it read while on the virtual tour



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