

## Press Clipping

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### Workshop on Access and Benefit Sharing of biological resources for local communities held

## **Ecologically stable Sikkim would lead to stable economy: Subedi**

**Staff Reporter**

**GANGTOK, April 22:** The Minister for the State Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management Department SB Subedi has said that an ecologically safe and stable Sikkim ensures a secure economy and meaningful development.

He was speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural session of the two-day workshop on "Access and Benefit Sharing" (ABS) of biological resources for local communities here today.

"Sikkim's geographical location, its strategic international linkages with respect to its rich and unique bio-diversity, its demarcation in the one of the biodiversity hotspots and its services in tourism, power generation, animal husbandry, agriculture qualifies it be declared as an eco-sensitive zone," he said.

Also present were the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest cum Secretary ST Lachungpa, Dr Eklabya Sharma and Dr Krishna P Oli from the International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and the secretary of National Biodiversity Authority, Government of India Dr K Venkataraman.

While addressing the delegates from Nepal and India, Dr Oli said that the main reason behind organizing the workshop is to understand the dynamics of bio-diversity conservation systems and to look at the ways and means to augment and strengthen the process of accessing genetic and bio-diversity resources in the basis of promoting fair and equitable benefit sharing from accessing biological resources.

He also informed that another aim is to examine existing policy, laws and institutional frameworks of conservation of genetic resources and their conformity with the convention of biological diversity (CBD) such as customary arrangements, the bio-diversity act and regulations and other facets of the ABS regime in Sikkim including the status of traditional knowledge.

According to Dr Eklabya Sharma, ICIMOD has launched a regional project on ABS to understand the status of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices. The programme is implemented in Nepal, India, Bangladesh and Bhutan.

"Over the last two decades ICIMOD is involved in improving the livelihood security of the mountain communities through sustainable conserving and utilizing the resources and is activity engaged in supporting the central and the state governments in the implementation of CBD in Himalayan region," he said.

The workshop is being jointly organized by the State Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management Department and ICIMOD.