



Making Sikkim, a Zero-Waste Eco-Tourism State

A stakeholder consultation on ‘Shaping State’s strategy to make Sikkim a zero waste eco-tourism state - enabling jobs and inclusive growth’ was held in Gangtok (Assam) on 16th November 2018. The conference was conducted by Development Alternatives (DA) and Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim (ECOSS), in partnership with the Integrated Mountain Initiatives (IMI) and Green Economy Coalition. This initiative is supported by the European Union. The consultation aimed to get multi-stakeholders together to explore gaps and challenges in making Sikkim a zero-waste eco-tourism state and also identify opportunities and potential for the way forward.

Sikkim, India’s first organic state, is a treasure of beauty and biodiversity. The state has seen a sharp rise in tourism generated revenue with better connectivity and promotion of tourism in the last few decades. The tourism sector faces considerable challenges that arise from ecological degradation due to unregulated expansion of the sector. The greatest ecological threats include poor solid waste management, disaster threats from unplanned construction activity, and indirect impacts on wildlife due to encroachment and pollution. The consultation aimed to create a platform for the civil society to collaborate perspectives and learnings for informing policy and implementation decisions in the state, with cues from the Sikkim Tourism Policy 2018.

About 35 stakeholders from various organisations, including the government, civil society organisations, enterprises, academia, etc. participated in the consultation. Shri Shakti Choudhury, Honourable Mayor, Gangtok Municipal Corporation, Sikkim highlighted the need for behaviour change - segregation at source for zero waste management - in Sikkim.

DA has prior experience in the entrepreneurship and waste sectors, which have significant linkages and importance with respect to the tourism sector in the state. We, along with our partners, identified gaps in implementation and planning with an intention to connect the government with relevant examples, resource persons and models to aid co-learning and augmentation wherever possible.