

## State Action Plan on climate change...

These areas are forests, wildlife, eco-tourism, water resources, energy efficiency, urban habitats, water resources and communities vulnerable to climate change at gram panchayat level", said Arrawatia to media today.

"The working groups drawn from various departments will deliberate on each sector and come up with their reports. The final report should be ready by October, after which we will do pilot projects on these areas", said the secretary. He informed that the action plan will contain both short-term and long-term measures for the next two decades.

The secretary added that German Development Bank is already in touch with DONER Ministry to take up the pilot projects for the Northeastern region for the pilot projects. The GTZ

has assured to provide capacity building workshops to our working groups and provide consultants for preparation of action plan, he said.

The action plan will give top priority to water resources in both urban and rural areas and those areas vulnerable to climate change up to gram panchayat levels, said Arrawatia.

"Water resources are being top priority for both urban and rural areas keeping in view of the vagaries of nature which has already seen reduction of winter rainfall to sizeable extent. This has affected many of our natural springs in rural areas", said the secretary.

According to Gangtok Met department, year 2009 was the warmest year in the century for Sikkim.

Arrawatia said that there has been an increase of 0.2 to 0.3 degree Celsius for Sikkim every ten years. So in the past 50 years, temperature in Gangtok has risen by 1 to 1.5 degree Celsius as per the Indian Meteorological department records, he said.

For conserving the water resources, the action plan will include identification of water recharge zones and take measures for recharging the water resources by plantation and

rain water harvesting, said the science & technology secretary. In urban areas, the plan will be to restock the catchment areas through planting local varieties of oak trees; he said.

Energy saving devices will be given additional focus in terms of encouraging use of solar devices and replace existing light bulbs with Condensed Florescent Lamps which save 80 percent of energy as compared to a normal electricity bulb, said Arrawatia.

Arrawatia said that Sikkim government in the past two decades has taken several exemplary measures to protect ecology in the Himalayan State. The action plan will further strengthen our steps towards environment protection, he said.

During the wrap-up session on May 15, additional Chief Secretary Karma Gyatso said that the proposed action plan should be cohesive and result oriented and added that the various working groups should come out with innovative ideas and alternative solutions for taking appropriate measures for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

A press release informs that Gyatso informed that the State Government has already initiated various measures for protection and preservation of environment and sustainable development and said that the State government will give very high priority for climate change adaptation and mitigation programmes.

Ms. Verra Soltz, Project Director, Natural Resources Management and her team

**FFLE DRAW**

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