



EASTERN HIMALAYAN NATURENOMICS™ FORUM

— 5th & 6th November, 2019 —
Guwahati, Assam, India



Rural Futures: Nature Capital Towards Universal Basic Assets



Report



The Forum: Goals & Vision

BALIPARA FOUNDATION

Preserving & building a nature-based civilization model in the Eastern Himalayas

Through the Rural Futures framework, emphasizing on the interdependence between humans and their ecosystems by optimizing natural assets & ecology

EASTERN HIMALAYAN NATURENOMICS™ FORUM

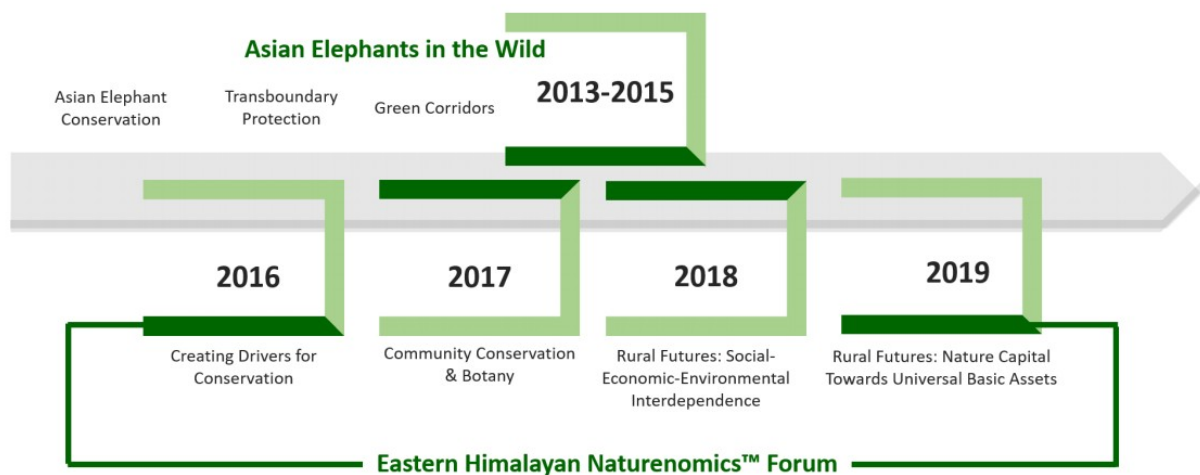
An interdisciplinary platform bringing together communities, academicians, conservationists to foster knowledge sharing, for future collaborative efforts on community-led conservation

A platform that recognizes community stories and voices from the Eastern Himalayas and brings forward the local communities to share their indigenous knowledge, challenges and more

A NATURENOMICS™ CIVILIZATION

- Self-reliant, self-sufficient communities
- Universal Basic Assets through Nature Capital
- Localized natural capital economies
- Securitized natural assets & restored habitats

The Evolution





SEE since 2013



Social Impact

- Action-driven, multi-disciplinary, dialogue between **2000+ participants** from **20+ countries**
- **Rural Futures** framework launched
- **103 Earth Heroes** recognised through Balipara Foundation Social Recognition Awards Winners have published **30+ books, 500+ scientific articles**
- Balipara Foundation Social Recognition Awards Recipients have published **30+ books, 500+ scientific articles**
- **Strengthening efforts to better the lives of Mahout communities** in Assam in collaboration with WWF India
- **Rural Futures: 21st Century Transformation for a Naturenomics™ Future** Launched



Economic Impact

- **Elephant Country brand** launched
- **Elephant Country: Asian Elephant Secretariat** launched
- Balipara Foundation Social Recognition Awards recipients established numerous opportunities for **sustainable livelihoods and successful eco-tourism models**



Ecological Impact

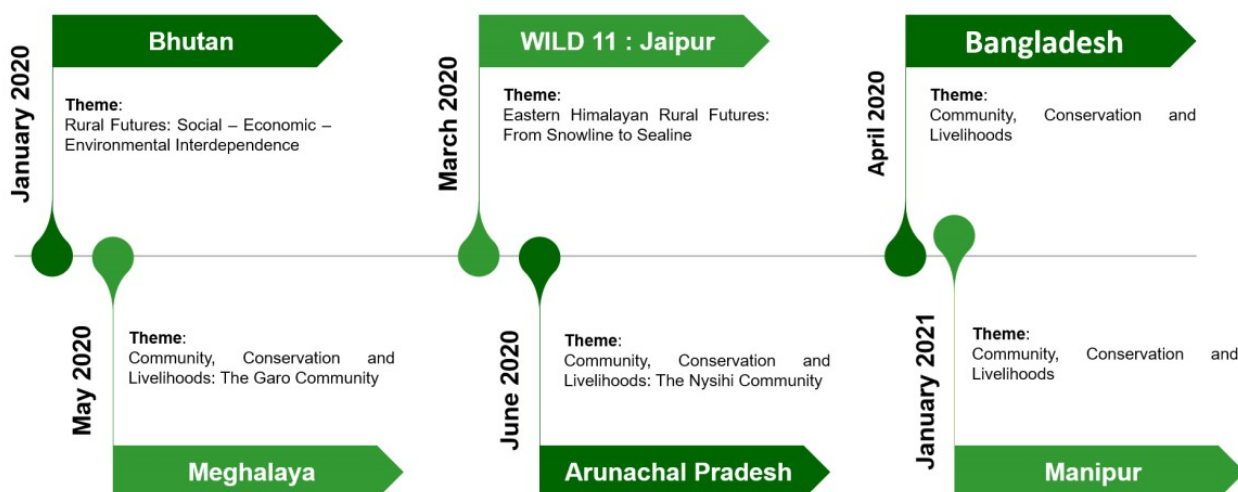
- **Elephant Country: Udalguri Landscape Mission** launched to restore Asian Elephant habitats
- **Orchids of the Eastern Himalayas** application launched
- **First Eastern Himalayan Biological Inventories** launched in partnership with ATREE, Balipara Foundation, KTK-Belt, National Biodiversity Centre, Bhutan
- Creating a multi-disciplinary approach to promote conservation of Asian Elephant habitats and migration corridor by creating sustainable economic and social incentives like **Elephant Insurance schemes** that adds value for Communities and also through partnerships for fundraising with innovative Enterprises like the **Wildlife Friendly Enterprise Network** that promotes organic and Elephant Friendly products





Plans Ahead

Taking conversations to grassroots level for impactful conservation – Regional Eastern Himalayan Naturenomics™ Forums



Annual Eastern Himalayan Naturenomics™ Forum 2020



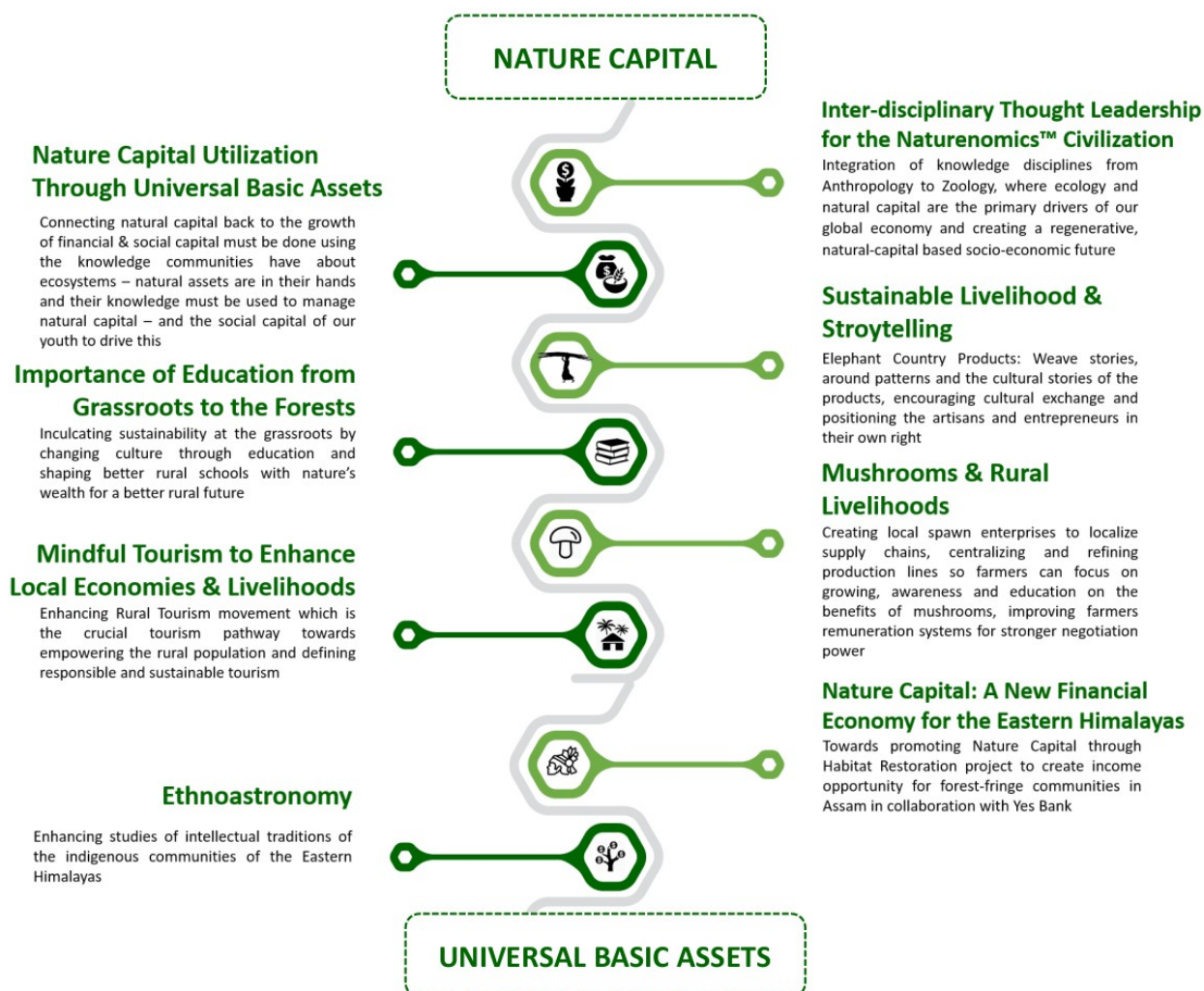
Theme- Rural Futures: From Snowline to Sealine





Towards a Naturenomics™ Civilization

RESOLUTIONS – OUTCOMES: EASTERN HIMALAYAN NATURENOMICS™ FORUM 2019



The Journey of Balipara Foundation & Eastern Himalayan Naturenomics™ Forum

Karishma Ahmed and Prabir Banerjee, Balipara Foundation, India

The session highlighted the Balipara Foundation's voyage since its establishment. The dialogue recalled the journey of Balipara Foundation and how much has happened over the year 2018-19.

Talk Highlights:

- Plantation of 1.3 million natural assets by August 2019—ahead of Balipara Foundation's original target of 1 million by 2020
- In Balipara Foundation's 12th birthday through CommuniTree, with over 47,500 people and many field partners, 134 Eco Task Force, MASK, Assam Investment Advisory Society, the Forest Department and the Assam State Rural Livelihood Mission, created over 280,000 natural assets in less than half an hour
- Launched 5 homestays in and around Balipara, across 5 distinct ethnic communities – Mising, Garo, Nyishi, Nepali and Assamese
- Identified over 250 species of mushrooms, out of which 1 has officially been identified as a new species & genus and 10 more in association with Kunming Institute of Botany and our dear friends, photographer Stephen Axford and documentary director Catherine Marciniak



<http://bit.ly/36claR1>

National & Global Strategies for the Sustainable Development Goals

Ambassador Chandrashekhar Dasgupta, Prime Minister's Council for Climate Change, India



The talk highlighted on the on the need to integrate sustainable development goals into national policies, plans and strategies, and regularize varied dimensions of sustainable development in the country

Talk Highlights:

- Sustainable Development rests on 3 pillars – protection of the environment, economic development and social development
- The task of ensuring progress in achieving sustainable development is too important to be left to the Government alone. Research institutions & NGOs play a crucial important role by educating public opinion and undertaking independent initiatives for promoting sustainable development



<http://bit.ly/2qqjZ26>



Inter-Disciplinary Thought Leadership for the Naturenomics™ Civilization



Ranjit Barthakur, Balipara Foundation, India

In conversation with

- A.M. Singh, PCCF & HoFF, Ministry of Environment & Forest, Govt. of Assam, India – Govt. Representative
- Jianchu Xu, Kunming Institute of Botany, China – Botanist
- Sunayana Sarkar, NMIMS, India – Geologist
- Dibakar Goswami, Washington State Dept of Ecology, USA
- K.M. Bujarbaruah, (Rtd.) Assam Agricultural University, India - Botanist & Namita Vikas, Yes Bank, India – Social Finance
- Mayank Vahia, NMIMS, India – Astrophysicist
- Rita Banerji, Green Hub & NEN, India – Documentary Filmmaker– Journalist
- Reza Masoom, Balipara Foundation, India – Engineer & Forester
- Dipti Ghorh, Balipara Foundation, India– Botanist

Panel Highlights-

- The goal for 2020 is Biodiversity Conservation and he will focus on its conversation especially in Assam
- Involvement of the youth to take the baton at the earliest stages to be able to find solutions suitable not just for mankind but for the environment as well – incorporating the notion of innovation
- The panel collectively urged the younger generation to take up the cause of conservation, so innovative, sustainable solutions to various environmental issues can be facilitate
- The much-needed aspect of employment and livelihood generation for the Asian highland people by imbibing regional culture and tradition
- Engaging with self-help groups and how engaging women in a similar discourse could help them feel empowered



<http://bit.ly/2OVAYTq>



The Naturenomics™ Civilization Through Rural Futures (RuFu™)

Joanna Dawson and Saurav Malhotra, Balipara Foundation, India

This talk introduced the vision blueprint of the Balipara Foundation for transforming the Eastern Himalayas over the next few decades.

Talk Highlights:

- The tension between biodiversity needs and human needs is artificially created and sustained – over centuries human cultures have lived in interdependence with nature, with human growth and natural growth in a symbiotic relationship
- Optimizing the natural capital value of our forests & land is the key to this interdependent economy – the value of a hectare of forest in Assam between 1997-2003 was approximately INR 713,272
- Sustainably liquidating this natural capital could deliver universal basic assets on a needs basis to vulnerable forest fringe communities, reducing social inequality and redistributing wealth, while incentivizing them to engage in activities that regenerate natural capital
- Self-reliant communities must be the heart of this, and they must be equipped by commons management skills, protections for community rights, open access technology and investments in natural capital



<http://bit.ly/34VvjSX>

Impacts Bonds Towards Universal Basic Assets

Saleem Khan, British Asian Trust, India



The talk highlighted on concept and functioning framework of Impact Bonds towards an innovative financial mechanism

Talk Highlights:

- Impact Bonds are result based financing mechanism
- It's a new and innovative way of funding outcomes and is the only solution that would foresee the SDG gap
- A measurable quantifiable outcome is crucial in assessing the Impact Bonds



<http://bit.ly/2Pk0mBd>

Nature Capital Optimisation for Delivering Universal Basic Assets

Anish Andheria, Wildlife Conservation Trust, India

In conversation with

- Sarath Davala, Basic Income Network, India
- Sarmistha Das, Tezpur University, India
- Rituraj Phukan, Green Guard National Organisation, India
- Suresh Pait, Pakke Jungle Camp, India

The session was chaired by Anish Andheria from the Wildlife Conservation Trust, with Sarmistha Das from Tezpur University, Sarath Davala from the Basic Income Network, Rituraj Phukan from the Green Guard Organization & Suresh Pait from Pakke Jungle Camp in conversation on key themes on natural capital for universal basic assets.



The panel dwelt on the importance of natural capital for equality, with a strong focus on the role of local communities – as those on the frontline facing a natural capital crisis, as agents of change and as those in greatest need of income and social security for their future.

Panel Highlights:

- While financial capital drives the world today, natural capital must be connected to the growth of financial & social capital or we will be facing some of the greatest tragedies known to man
- We are facing an employment crisis that leaves people vulnerable and a moral crisis centred around our consumption-centred economy, that has also led to the ecological destruction of today
- Connecting natural capital back to the growth of financial & social capital must be done using the knowledge communities have about ecosystems – natural assets are in their hands and their knowledge must be used to manage natural capital – and the social capital of our youth to drive this
- It is vital to work with the next generation to change their perspective and involve them in protecting natural capital, especially as a generation gap is emerging where younger generations chase immediate, short-term incomes & investment returns and look to outside intervention for “empowerment”, rather than organizing internally
- Communities can be their own change agents & empower themselves – the case of women in village, restoring water bodies by pooling together their own resources & using their own resources to restore the water bodies for fishing
- Ecology can be put back in economy, for example, by fundamentally rethinking agriculture, for example, by creating whole ecosystems which support growth by maintaining a natural balance



<http://bit.ly/34UjY5>

Anthropogenic Causes & Geogenic Outcomes: An arterial link Universal Basic Assets

Sunayana Sarkar, Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies, India

This talk focused on the link between geological processes and one of the most fraught arenas of natural capital: our mineral wealth.

Talk Highlights:

- Mineral natural resources are finite & have a very slow regeneration rate; therefore, we need careful government policies to govern their use and extraction
- India has a strong overlap between areas that are mineral rich, forest rich and which are lands of forest-fringe communities, requiring us to think carefully about how we manage these resources effectively for our future
- This mineral wealth could be used to deliver universal basic assets, but to do so they must be used sustainably, and their use must be governed by special laws



<http://bit.ly/2s4HZrT>

How to Make Environment Mainstream News?

Kaushik Deka, India Today, India



The talk Highlighted the dynamics of environmental reporting, exploring how environmentalists can better improve their outreach through mainstream media outlets to bring environmental concerns to a broader lay audience across India.

Talk Highlights:

- Environmentalists need to remember that environmental education in the country is either lacking or poorly imparted, which means the vast majority of the country lack environmental consciousness
- Environmental activists must think about what the role of a good communicator is and what will sell to media outlets when reaching out, to connect with a lay audience
- Environmental activism is plagued by a lack of engaging visuals to sell stories to people – but these visuals are what are needed to create immediate, emotive impact in the minds of people
- The connection between environment, activism and media must be multidisciplinary – for a holistic perspective – and frivolous – to be accessible to a lay audience
- There is a need for healthy communication between media and environmental activists, to simplify concepts and highlight key issues in communication, to enable media outlets to efficiently communicate these stories to a lay audience

<http://bit.ly/2qv5fPC>

Ground Water Contamination and Natural Biosorbents

Harshita Singh, Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies, India

The talk explored the ongoing, pervasive issue of groundwater contamination in the Eastern Himalayas and potential natural solutions to reduce this contamination.

Talk Highlights:

- Groundwater contamination not just destroys natural assets, but its pervasive nature exerts a significant toll on future generations – radioactive metals like uranium, for example, cause DNA mutations that can have serious negative health effects down the line
- Natural biosorbents are a key solution to this contamination issue, by serving as coagulating agents for these hard metals – purifying the water & making it easier to remove contaminating materials
- Research on plants in Assam could potentially yield natural solutions for reducing groundwater contamination



Importance of Education from the Grassroots to the Forests

Vibha Dhawan, TERI, India

In Conversation with



- Ravneet Pawha, Deakin University, India
- Rishi Raj Sarmah, Living Art, India
- Tamara Law Goswami, India
- Vasavi Acharjya, IIFPL, India

Panel Highlights:

- Inculcating sustainability at the grassroots by changing culture through education
- Shaping better rural schools with nature's wealth for a better rural future
- The single linking thread to the whole ecosystem in education
- The roots are very well connected in a rural setup. The bigger vision lies in creating and implementing business models inspired by rural schools
- The right pathway towards building a rural future is bringing urban children to rural schools and inspiring them and making them aware about the nature-based model of education

Nature Capital for Food Security

K. M. Bujarbaruah, the former Vice Chancellor of Assam Agricultural University

In conversation with

- Jatindra Sarma Forest department of Assam, India
- Professor Zabed Hossain from Dhaka University, Bangladesh
- Komision Mili, Mising village in Baligaon, India

The panel dwelt on the potential for the rich natural biodiversity of the Eastern Himalayas in protecting and building resilience across food systems in the region

Panel Highlights:

- Biodiversity studies are essential in understanding food systems and how to build resilience in them
- It is essential for institutions to study plant and microbial interaction to truly understand the land farmers cultivate, to effectively bolster cultivation and maximize yields
- Organic farming must be introduced across the region, to maintain soil fertility
- It is important, as well, to understand the adaptation processes of plants or trees in differing conditions, to derive solutions for food security
- Microbes are the most important part of our food systems, playing a significant role in protecting land productivity



Enhancing Nature Capital Through Organic Agroforestry

Siddharth Singh, The Jute Foundation, India



The talk highlighted about how jute as a product can really help sustain, conserve, preserve climate and the physical environment.

Talk Highlights:

- The practice of jute cultivation empowers rural economy, women, the farmers
- The role of jute is crucial in protecting ecologically fragile zones
- Jute bags are the green alternative to the plastic usage

Mindful Tourism to Enhance Local Economies & Alter Livelihoods

Raj Basu, Hep Tourism, India

In Conversation with

- Prabir Banerjee, Balipara Foundation, India
- Roopa Baruah, Kahini Media, India
- Niranjana Das, Harupeswar Foundation, India
- Jashoda Chhetri, Association for Conservation & Tourism, India

Panel Highlights:

- Tourism is the way to progress, empower and treasure the indigenous culture & traditions
- An important aspect of tourism is “How you communicate what you have”
- Rural Tourism movement is the tourism empowering the rural population and can be defined as responsible and sustainable tourism
- Polo sport is also a way to save the endangered ponies of Manipur



Mushrooms & Rural Livelihoods

Peter Mortimer, Kunming Institute of Botany,

In Conversation with

- Akeina Gonmei
- Gabriel Gonmei, Rongmei Baptist Institute,
- Pranjal Baruah, General Secretary at the Mushroom Development Foundation
- Prasanna Daimary, India,
- Gautam Baruah, Balipara Foundation.

Panel Highlights:

- The mushroom market is projected to grow at a rapid rate, from 12.7 million tonnes and \$38 billion in 2018 to 20 million tonnes and \$60 billion dollars per annum in the next couple of years
- The scope for augmenting farmer incomes in the Eastern Himalayas through mushroom cultivation is wide, especially as the region imports approximately INR 40,000 crores of animal-based protein annually – a 10% share of this protein value through mushroom cultivation could create an INR 4000 crore market within the region
- The market in India and the Eastern Himalayas can be developed through identifying and developing new species for sale, creating local spawn enterprises to localize supply chains, centralizing and refining production lines so farmer can focus on growing, awareness and education on the benefits of mushrooms

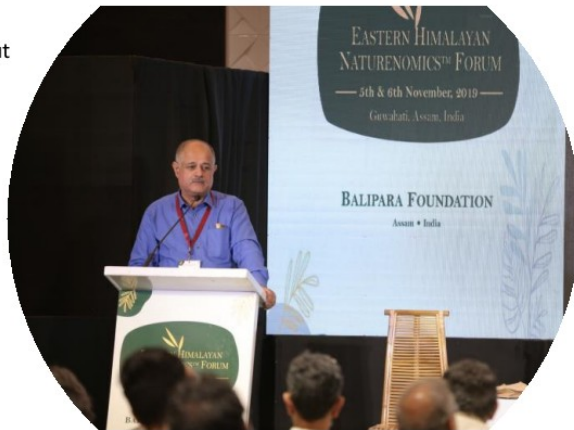


Asian Elephants in the Wild

K. K. Sarma, Assam Agricultural University, India

Talk Highlights:

- With numbers plummeting rapidly, India, out of the 13 countries, is the only one to have the largest population of Asian elephants, which would be about 25000 to 27500
- Losing our forest lands to urbanization is the primary cause of elephant habitat loss
- An elephant requires anything between 100 to 500 km square area and about 200-300 gm of food in order to survive
- The population of elephants in Assam had been declining at 0.96% per year between 1993-1997 and 0.25% per year, between 1997-2002. Poaching further contributes to this loss
- As a solution, building canal as opposed to electrical fences to mitigate the conflict, as well as implementing largescale elephant corridor restoration drive



Ethnoastronomy

Mayank Vahia, Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies, India

Talk Highlights:



- Traditional astronomy has strong links with tracking days and seasons, with a strong link to agricultural practices
 - Folk art is rich with depictions of the skies that reveal deep mythological, cosmological and cultural understandings of life and death in cycle with each other. Each culture sees the skies differently, revealing their cultural preoccupations and understanding of the world
 - The precision of traditional knowledge is highly accurate. Charts from the west coast for travelling to particular locations in west Asia with directions via constellations are precisely on point and can still be used to guide travel.
- The oldest supernova record dates back to 3000 B.C. in Kashmir and is backed by scientific records. Tribal groups pass down astronomical knowledge of events that occurred back in 1000 B.C.
- This knowledge goes unrecognized because it fails to match our contemporary imaginary of what literacy, knowledge and education looks like



<http://bit.ly/2qpDUy8>



Bridging the Gap: India & China Towards Sustainable Development

Mayank Vahia, Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies, India, India

In Conversation with

- Krishan Varma, Special Secretary (Rtd.), Govt. of India
- S. Ramadorai, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India
- Ambassador Chandrashekhar Dasgupta, Prime Minister's Council for Climate Change, India
- Jianchu Xu, Kunming Institute of Botany, India



The uniqueness of the session allowed the participants and the panelists to expand their horizon in terms of partnerships, collaborations and the exploration of the vast opportunities together.

Panel Highlights:

- Both countries have a lot to learn from the practices of indigenous people along with their cultures. These exchanges could also take place through mindful tourism inclusive of the need to enjoy the intricate nature of lifestyle
- Technology in the current times and in the future have played and will play a very important role in bridging gaps. These gaps will not only be between countries but in the field health, education, empowerment and accessibility.
- Therefore, coming together of India and China through the development course could possibly be on the best solutions to large scale populations growth while keeping traditional practices and culture accountable for people to fall back on a blueprint of a better living
- Mountain Futures Program is one way however, in which there can be a structural dimension for the future. Thus, ecological civilization comes into the forefront here – there is better technology, ecology, super-technology, agriculture etc. tea itself, for instance, is a result of the Indo-Chinese relationship
- The Indo-Chinese relationship is a complex one. There are certain things that can transcend the differences though. The panel has put forwards various areas where the two countries can cooperate
- The Chinese technology in managing the ecology can be taken from the Chinese – replicating them into suiting the Indian needs can be a viable method. The second thing is the finance sector. Economics can drive politics for the preservation of culture and tradition. Conservation and preservation are key here



Sustainable Tourism in the Eastern Himalayan Region: Opportunities & Challenges

Krishan Varma, Special Secretary (Rtd.), Govt. of India



The session focused upon development of sustainable tourism and the impact of growing mass tourism on the environment.

Talk Highlights:

- Mass tourism has contributed to problems like degradation of forest land and resources, decrease in water level, and animal and human conflict
- While the government has been promoting tourism through global media campaigns, heritage trade, it's important that some parameters are laid down for controlling associated problems – disaster management, crisis management, tourism management, and tourism enterprise
- Some of the solutions that can be listed under sustainable tourism are – creating special divisions to look after different aspects of tourism, community participation, capacity building, tourism information centers, identifying gap areas, and promoting opportunities

Wilderness... The Nature-Based Solution for Life, Livelihoods & Love

Devanshi Vaid, India Development Review, India

In Conversation with

- Bittu Sahgal, Sanctuary Nature Foundation, India
- Vance G. Martin, WILD Foundation, USA

Panel Highlights:

- Bringing green infrastructure, i.e. ecosystem back to life is the only way to survive a climate change— This also essentially means that deserts must be left as deserts, since food security of people lies there
- The ongoing water crisis in India, although there are about 3000 dams in the country, all drying out rapidly. It's an imperative to bring the catchments to life with the help from the country's valuable asset i.e. its people
- Indigenous knowledge and the self-sustainable symbiotic relation between the forest-fringe communities and the Eastern Himalayan biodiversity
- Adopting the concept of urban wild nature would be a good start to accommodating the different aspirations of people for living a good life. However, efforts should be made to protect areas where the biological diversity is in threat due to rapid development. Adopting green measures in cities would be the best way to tackle climate change





Heroes of the Wild Frontiers

Anish Andheria, Wildlife Conservation Trust, India

In Conversation with



- Krishnendu Bose, EarthCare Films, India
- Rohini Ballave Saikia, Govt. of Assam, India
- Kime Rambia, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, India
- Santi Ram Chetri, Govt. of Assam, India
- Tangru Meiji, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, India

The session showed Filmmaker Krishnendu Bose's two latest docuseries, *Heroes of the Wild Frontiers* highlighting the journey of forest rangers — the unsung heroes of the wild of Kaziranga National Park (Assam), and Pakke Tiger Reserve (Arunachal Pradesh).

Panel Highlights:

- Forest officials in Pakke Tiger Reserve walk 8km every day through tough terrain to hunt down poachers
- There are 39 anti-poaching camps around the borders of the Pakke reserve camp, but it is still not enough
- While the local communities help with the conservation efforts initiated by the government, they often do not receive the minimum wage that they are given on a regular basis, so they often go on for months without any payment. This, and a lack of job security, have contributed to a deficit in permanent workers
- In Kaziranga National Park, as of today the poaching numbers are in control but there are other bigger issues like habitat management, water holes sedimented because of annual floods leading to the changes in the ecosystem, grasslands being taken over by the woodlands
- Kaziranga National Park is lacking in the adequate research the park needs
- Maintaining a balance between the narratives of the wild and of the humans are vital
- One might have the greatest of shots, but it wouldn't be consumed without a great story. The series are liked, it is because of the characters, the stories that are gathered from each park. That's when the heroes really come out strong and add to the narrative



<http://bit.ly/2DjfcCA>



Community Autonomy & Governance of Nature Capital

Lt. Gen. Arun Kumar Sahni

In Conversation with

- Kartik Shukul, India
- Biswajit Chakrabarty, FICCI, India
- Tambor Lyngdoh, Khasi Hills REDD+, India
- Kaushik Deka, India Today, India
- Sarath Davala, Basic Income Network, India
- Mehdi Arif Hussain, Govt. of Assam, India

Panel Highlights:

- Providing autonomy in a manner where indigenous communities thrive alone on whatever the harvest
- The Forest Rights Act and its impact on forest produce and significance to sustainable development.
- The conflicting nature of the ownership of land— how land ownership laws have been subject to various kinds of manipulation. Citing an example of an incident, the Government of Maharashtra issued a notification to set up a cold storage facility in a land already registered under the Forest Rights Act
- To create an infrastructure to provide autonomy to local communities and to inter-weave it to the existing local infrastructure



Sustainable Livelihood Initiative through 'Empower'

Hasina Kharbhih, Impulse Network, India



Talk Highlights:

- Economic opportunities through sustainable and consistent market access are the strongest point of intervention for reducing human trafficking and migration
- Working across the value chain by bringing together multiple specialized skills and stakeholders through collective leadership, to create clusters for sourcing, production and distribution enables the volume and scale that is the key for livelihoods programmes
- Women cannot be seen as workers, but must be empowered as artists and artisans, where weaving becomes a supplementary livelihood programme integrated into their local culture and agriculture-based economies
- Essential to weave stories that are not focused around women as victims, but around sustainable fashion and cultural art, using cultural documentation to weave stories around patterns and the cultural stories of products, encouraging cultural exchange and positioning the women as entrepreneurs in their own right


<http://bit.ly/38cyRCf>

Nature Capital: A

alayas

Sarath Davala, Basic Income Network, India

In conversation with

- Saleem Khan British Asian Trust, India
- Rakesh Shejwal, Yes Bank, India
- Anirudh S Singh, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, India
- Vijay Yagnamurthy, Tata Trusts, India

The panel focused on the need for changing economic paradigms to meet current environmental challenges of climate change and ongoing biodiversity loss. Natural capital based financial instruments and alternate innovative funding models to foster better outcomes in the development and conservation sector formed the backbone of conversation, as the panelists debated the future of both development and environmental outcomes in the Eastern Himalayas



Key Highlights:

- A large proportion of the economy is considered 'unbankable' and are excluded from regulated financial infrastructure, forcing reliance on moneylenders and other exploitative microfinance-based systems
- There is a strong correlation between our current/legacy growth model and the depletion of natural resources including forests – in Arunachal, SOR collection went from INR 700 crore in 2017 to INR 2000 crores in 2019, coupled with the loss of 200 sqkm of forests in the state
- Natural capital could finance the economy through instruments such as innovative debt instruments, first loss default guarantee financing, debt for nature swaps, biodiversity offsets, conservation banking and climate/green bonds
- Natural capital accounting is important to measure the value of natural capital in the economy & reflect the real cost of goods we consume – the natural capital protocol used by brands such as Puma fundamentally reconceptualize consumer-product relations by creating consumer awareness of the complete ecological footprint and natural capital use value of a good before purchasing
- Globally, however, natural capital financing is facing a shortfall. The UN expects to raise \$100 billion per annum to finance developing nations' transition to a green economy, but biodiversity loss already represents \$300-400 billion per annum.
- The corporate sector needs to move towards investments that have green solutions, which mitigate and address climate change
- Development impact bonds have the potential to close the SDG funding gap through providing the scale and funding to achieve outcomes, while giving the development sector greater freedom to take risks and build new models to create effective impact
- Each of these financial instruments come with risks in-built: there must be a balance between greed and hope, otherwise these financing models may worsen scenarios and entrench inequalities even further when the profit motive takes first priority





Conservation Beyond Borders

Sonali Ghosh from the Ministry of Environment & Forests, India, Niraj Kakati and Persis Farooqy, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh

In Conversation with



- Rita Banerji, GreenHub, India
- Bibuhti Lakhar, Aaranyak, India
- A.M. Singh, Head of Forest Force in Assam;
- PR Marak, Chief Conservator of Forests, Meghalaya
- Abhinandan Saikia, TISS, India
- Swapnil Baruah, IAS (Retd.), Govt. of Assam;
- Anjali Tirkey from the PAJHRA Society,
- Sheila Bora, INTACH, India

The panel raised key issues in preserving natural heritage by involving stakeholders across communities, NGOs, governments and international bodies, the intimate links between natural heritage and cultural heritage and the vital role of research in documenting and curating heritage for the future.

Key Highlights:

- Research is important to understand, document and monitor the nature and health of natural heritage at sites such as Kaziranga & Manas – this cannot be left to the forest department alone and must be supported by research institutions
- University-government partnerships are key to documenting natural heritage and creating scientific management solutions and plans to enrich their most unique features
- It is important to understand that communities who own land often have a different perception and understanding of it than conservationists – for many of them, heritage status is seen as a negative as it closes off access to land – and significant, patient dialogue is required to bridge this gap
- The overlap of mineral rich areas and natural heritage sites is a pressing issue in states such as Meghalaya, where the potential earning value of minerals often overrides concerns for maintaining ecosensitive zones etc
- Getting heritage protection is a political process as much as a technical one, with decision-making power significantly concentrated in certain cluster of countries. The heritage status application process, therefore, must be supported by concentrated lobbying efforts from the diplomatic corps
- The overlap between tea and forests in the region can be used to build a transboundary connection with China through our shared heritage in tea culture
- Culture is intimately intertwined with natural heritage and it is incumbent on us to protect our cultural and natural heritage first, if we seek to gain recognition, as illustrated by the case of Majuli





BALIPARA FOUNDATION SOCIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS 2019





14 winners across 7 states and 4 countries



Annual Balipara Foundation Award

Bengia Manna Sonam
Arunachal Pradesh, India

Presented by His Excellency
Chandrashekhar Dasgupta, India

Bengia Manna Sonam, leveraged rural tourism & homestay movement, facilitated economic independence for women, driving them to conserve local traditions and natural resources



Special Recognition – Habitat Restoration

Tanzema Elephant Friendly Village, Bhutan

Presented by Riniki Bhuyan Sarma
Pride East Entertainments, India

Tanzema Elephant Friendly Village has been actively involved in resolving man-animal conflict and successfully restoring elephant habitat



Lifetime Achievement Award

Sagar Mehta
Assam, India

Presented by
Devika Dasgupta, India

Sagar Mehta for over 65 years has been actively engaged towards revolutionizing community conservation and mobilizing masses to implement afforestation drive and restore water bodies



Special Recognition – Mushrooms for Food Security

Bilinso Syiemlieh: Kong
Meghalaya, India

Presented by Ram Muivah
Northeastern Council, India

Bilinso Syiemlieh Kong is an expert on wild mushrooms, fruits and ornamental plants. She has a vast knowledge on indigenous flora & fauna & has been living interdependently with nature for the past 60 years

**Young Naturalist Award****Ganga Limbu
Nepal**Presented by
Victor Banerjee, Actor, India

Ganga Limbu from Nepal, a visual storyteller and educator, associated with the Vertical University project by KTK-Belt. She has been actively involved in training the youth to document the knowledge and plant diversity in their communities

**Forest Ranger Award****Sherab Dorji
Bhutan**Presented by Sangeeta Barthakur
Child Special Educator, USA

Sherab Dorji has created a bamboo and cane community forest management group which mobilize communities to manage seedlings of cane and bamboo

**Special Recognition – Social
Entrepreneur****Hasina Kharbhih
Meghalaya, India**Presented by A.M. Singh, PCCF- Environment
& Forest, Govt. of Assam, India

Hasina Kharbhih's endeavor has let her start Impulse network in an effort to help the women of several villages apply their skills to develop a sustainable livelihood

**Naturenomics™ Award****Kurutsechu Self Help Group
Arunachal Pradesh, India**Presented by Dr. Dibakar Goswami,
Washington State Dept. Of Ecology, USA

Kürütsechu Self Help Group has taken initiative to restore and revive a heritage practice-cotton cultivation, and in the process, propel communities towards a sustainable rural future



Eastern Himalayan Conservation Award

**Rohini Ballave Saikia, IFS
Assam, India**

Presented by Vibha Dhawan
TERI, India

Rohini Ballave Saikia, spearheaded some of the crucial conservation and anti-poaching initiatives, in the Kaziranga National Park



Green Guru Award

**Dr. Zabed Hossain
Bangladesh**

Presented by Karuna Singh
Earth Day Network, India

Dr. Zabed Hossain has done extensive research entailing plant-microbe interactions, abiotic stresses on plants and its adaptation mechanism



Special Recognition – Interdisciplinary Environmentalism

**Biswendu Chatterjee
Tripura, India**

Presented by Rekha Poddar
Cane Craft, India

Biswendu Chatterjee has spearheaded as a leader and has worked towards building the dynamics between journalism, education & environmental activism



Food For the Future Award

**Mahan Borah
Assam, India**

Presented by RJ Alia
Big FM, India

Mahan Chandra Borah preserved unique indigenous rice seeds to help farmers reach greater output in the foothills of the Eastern Himalayas



Nature Conservancy Award

Moirangthem Loiya Ngamba
Manipur, India

Presented by Ravneet Pawha
Deakin University, India

Moirangthem Loiya Ngamba transformed acres of barren land into a verdant forest and is responsible for the increased green cover in Manipur



Green Guru Award

Dr. Sherub
Bhutan

Presented by Rima Das
Filmmaker, India

Dr. Sherub has been instrumental in the assessment of bird diversity in the protected areas of Bhutan and is Bhutan's first ornithologist



Naturenomics™ Art Awards

Abhigyan & Samaira
Assam, India

Presented by Ashwani Anand
Vivanta, India



Naturenomics™ Essay Awards

Janifar, Pritisha, Raktim
Assam, India

Presented by Purnima Devi Barman
Aaranyak, India





7TH RABINDRANATH BARTHAKUR MEMORIAL LECTURE

Survival Revolution through Wilderness Restoration



Vance G. Martin, President of WILD Foundation and an expert in nature conservation and wilderness protection, opened his speech recalling the dark era of the apartheid in Africa. It took a revolution to end the atrocities that crippled the continent. Martin thinks, humanity has once again reached a moment that calls for a revolution. That this time around, it is a matter of survival. What it also means is that we have been given the responsibility to rewrite human history, that we now have the opportunity to create a new world, like Rabindranath Barthakur did, all those years ago.

Vance took us to the start of the western civilization, with a daunting image of *The Lupa Capitolina* projected on the screen to urge his audience to rediscover the myth of Romulus and Remus. Now more than ever, it is almost an emblem of progress. Progress, whereby we get our nourishment from the very teeth of mother nature. Also, progress, as depicted by John Gast, in 1872, with changes catching up on the lives and socio-cultural practices of people from the bygone era.

Vance made an appeal to his audience to not just understand and invest in transforming the hard infrastructure around us but towards improving the green infrastructure. He inviting everyone present to join the movement, to change our relationship with nature and restore humanity to the origins of nature nurturing us.

The Rabindranath Barthakur Memorial lecture, that carries forward the legacy of a great environmentalist, his practices of conservation and his vision of sustainability, on the evening of the 6th of November 2019, witnessed Vance G. Martin's thoughts and words resonate with every individual present, as he called out, yet again, for a survival revolution.



<http://bit.ly/37oCSTI>



PUBLICATIONS

Launched at the Forum



Members of Bodo, Garo, Nepali, Mishing & Assamese Communities launched Naturenomics™ 8.0 – “**Handbook on Ethnobotany: Across 7 Communities of Assam**”

[Read Book](#)



“**Rural Futures: 21st Century Transformation for the Naturenomics™ Future**” launched at 7th Balipara Foundation Social Recognition Awards 2019.

[Read Book](#)



Karuna Singh, Director-Earth Day India launched the e-book “**Pathways to Green India Innovative Ideas to Protect our Species Vol.3**”

COMMUNICATIONS FOOTPRINT

Print Media Communications Footprint

1 Press Conference

62 articles in leading publications in English, Assamese & Hindi

Print Coverage in 8 North-Eastern States and 2 Countries



[Read Literature](#)

Television Media Communications Footprint

2 Studio Interviews – North East Live & Pratidin Times

14 TV interviews over two days at the Forum venue

30 Days Television Ticker – News Live

Event Coverage on-

- News 18
- Pratidin Times
- North East Live
- News Live
- Prag News



TV Ticker



Outdoor Advertisements Footprint

5 hoardings across Guwahati, Assam



Print Advertisements Footprint



Radio Jingle



20 days starting 15th October 2019





Digital Media Footprint



Facebook



Followers- **20,529** vs 17,000 in 2018



Posts = **123**



Total Likes (on the posts) – **21,066**



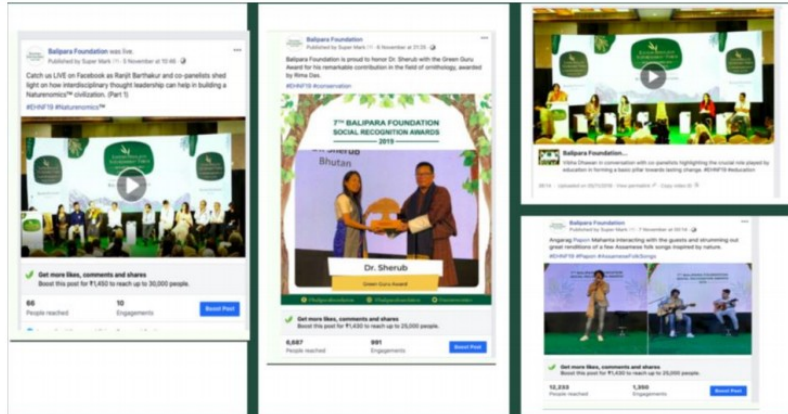
Total Reach - **1,33,247**



Shares - **120**



Comments - **264**



Instagram



Followers- **1,183** vs 365 followers in 2018



Posts - **148**



Total Likes (on the posts) – **2,126**



Total Reach - **71,032**



Total Impressions - **63,091**



Engagement – **2,061**



Twitter



Followers- **1,918**



Tweets - **149**



Total Impressions - **63,091**



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