

REPORT



BALIPARA FOUNDATION

Assam • India



RURAL FUTURES THROUGH NATURE CAPITAL FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

RESOLUTIONS-OUTCOMES

Education:

Naturenomics™ School to collaborate with Earth University, Navdanya Biodiversity Conservation Farm in Doon Valley for Curriculum Development and Exchange Education programmes

Eco – Tourism:

Instituting home stays that serve to re-wild depleted areas next to biodiverse zones to drive community conservation efforts

Universal Basic Income:

Leverage Nature Capital to develop universal basic assets and achieve universal basic income

Social Delivery Assets across Balipara County:

Sustainable Water Access Solutions to the households in Balipara County

Mapping Best Practices:

Implementing Social resource mapping for better insight into the social interactions with the location

Indigenous Knowledge:

Focusing on the role of indigenous knowledge in maintaining the sustainability of a community

Market Linkages:

Developing local and international market Linkages to create social entrepreneurs across Balipara



**SPEAKERS AT THE EASTERN HIMALAYAN
 NATURENOMICS™ FORUM 2018**



Vandana Shiva



Mark Davies



Kamal Bawa



Lisa Mills



Diana Owen



Anish Andheria



Jianchu Xu



Bittu Sahgal



Rolf Von Bueren



Kelli Rogers



Sunayana Sarkar



Misako Namiki



Anindita Phukan



Komisson Mili



Anindita Roy Saha



Kartik Shukul



Vishal Massey




**EASTERN HIMALAYAN
 NATURENOMICS™ FORUM**
 2018



Binod Dulu Borah



Tambor Lyngdoh



Akeina Gonmei



Maksudur Rahman



Dietrich Schmidt



Anirban Ghosh



Shankar Venkateswaran



Jitul Kalita



Rakhee Sharma



K.K. Sarma



Surendra Kumar



Rituraj Phukan



Rohit Choudhury



Prasant Choudhury



Mike Korchinsky



Jatin Bavishi



**Lt Gen Arun Kumar
Sahni**




**EASTERN HIMALAYAN
 NATURENOMICS™ FORUM**
 — 2018 —



Nellie Ahmed Tanweer



Chitrnanjan Kaushik



Ketan Patel



Biswajit De



Yoji Natori

GLIMPSES




**EASTERN HIMALAYAN
 NATURENOMICS™ FORUM**
 — 1st & 2nd November, 2018 —
 Guwahati, Assam, India
BALIPARA FOUNDATION
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HIGHLIGHTS OF EASTERN HIMALAYAN NATURENOMICS™ FORUM 2017

&

RURAL FUTURES: SOCIAL - ENVIRONMENTAL – ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE

Ranjit Barthakur, Balipara Foundation, India



Balipara Foundation Founder and President, Mr. Ranjit Barthakur addressed the aspirations of his team to imbibe ideas imparted by Food Sovereignty leader Vandana Shiva and the hope that we all share to be working with her in the field. Subsequently, he stated that the Eastern Himalayan Naturenomics™ Forum is a space to discuss both failures and successes of the development sector across disciplines and issues.

Some of the successes and failures that were mentioned since the Forum held in 2017 were as follows:

- Engagement of people more than before with the hands-on work done
- Balipara Foundation has been able to bring about a handful of rural linkages and the plan is to continue further with any kind of rural engagement
- The need for applicability of concepts in the field along with more connectivity and networking moving more towards modern ways of communicating ideas and ways of implementing the ideas
- We need to be able to bridge gaps under various trajectories: man-conflict along with the ability to mobilize people, the urban-rural divide, the Asian Elephant Secretariat, the disconnect between banking institutions/corruption inside funding agencies etc.

Over the years, through on and off field experiences, we have realized that there are institutions in the society which can and must play a vital role in collaborating with civil society so as to make an impact which is not just quantifiable, which could possible create a revolution thus leading to the change we want to see in our communities and in the world. Mr. Barthakur concluded passionately by stating the following ***“We learn from what is impossible and what is possible. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to convince people to get back and work harder to achieve our goals and dreams.*”**



<https://bit.ly/2RfdkA2>



WELCOME ADDRESS

ORGANIC RURAL FUTURES:

COMMUNITIES, CONSERVATION &

LIVELIHOODS

Vandana Shiva, Indian Scholar & Inspirational Leader, Navdanya, India



Vandana Shiva has been a figure of great inspiration. Her charismatic leadership consists of experiences as a physicist, an environmental scientist connecting technology with conservation. At the Eastern Himalayan Naturenomics™ Forum, she addressed the august audience by introducing the idea of forest conservation from the perspective of the Chipko Movement. The connection between conserving nature and the context of the Forum, which is Rural Futures, has had a strong base for years on end. The Chipko Movement demonstrated great power that lay in the hands of the community, especially the women who were defending their livelihoods generated from the forests. According to Dr. Shiva, it was one of the most amazing organization which entailed the practices of Mahatma Gandhi – they practiced satyagraha and the strength that was displayed, of facing the truth along with protests towards unjust systems and the violence against the Earth.

As one of her anecdotes and experiential yarns, Dr. Shiva shared the notion of –

- Engaging children who could possibly be a part of the incubation to save our environment and the Earth – she mentioned how children of today’s generation think of our existence moving towards the “dinosaur way”

On a concluding note, Dr. Shiva has proposed a probable collaboration with Balipara Foundation in the next year where the vision would be to link Mahatma Gandhi’s ideologies to conservation and rural empowerment leading to the following:

COLLECTIVE CONSERVATION

DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMY

**CIRCULAR ECONOMY OR
 VASUDEVA KUTUMB**



<https://bit.ly/2BA0Xt3>



RELEVANCE

OF

ALICE IN HIMALAYAN WONDERLAND

Mark Davies, Oxford, UK



“Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do.”

Starting off with a mark true to a historian, Mr. Davies starts his speech quoting Sir Carol’s greatest novel, written way back in 1882, Alice in Wonderland. Mr. Davies related the scenario of the state of Assam, bringing the pun in the Title, referring to the Undulating and Hilly terrain of Assam - Alice in the Undulating Land or The Natural (Unnatural) History of Wonderland. He set out to explain the various facts about the original stories, bringing into light various facts and unknown stories about the land. Starting off with the Iconic Rabbit of the story, an animal still found on the banks of the river Thames, this character is responsible for the iconic term “Down the Rabbit hole”. Also using the Alice theme in almost every possible and dynamic name, he describes the river system of the river Thames through another one of his stories, Alice in Waterland.

Some of the facts from Mr. Davies are highlighted below-

- His ancestor Thomas Wood was the first man to have made the map of Assam way back 1793, the city of Guwahati precisely speaking
- Spelled as GWAHATTY in the original copy of the map exists in the British museum of History, while a printed copy is displayed here in India
- The story also unfortunately takes a grim turn as his Great Grandfather wasn’t able to complete his journey due to undulating and difficult terrain through which rowing was next to impossible, hence the dream to tracking down the mighty Brahmaputra remained a dream

Following these footsteps, Mr. Davies now plans to recreate or rather relive this whole river journey in the coming days.



<https://bit.ly/2Kxap2Y>



**RURAL FUTURES:
 COMMUNITIES SPEAK**



Objective:

- To engage local community members in a dialogue to figure out the best ways to identify problems & find customized solutions

Panel Speakers

Chair: Gautam Baruah, Balipara Foundation, India

- Tambor Lyngdoh, Meghalaya
- New Jaloukie Village, Nagaland
- Khem Chetri, Wild Mahseer, India

- Komisson Mili, Baligaon Green Village, India
- Binod Dulu Borah, Green Guard Nature Organization, India

The session was chaired by Gautam Baruah, Balipara Foundation and it consisted of discussions which transpired across representations from various communities. The panel began with the role of community engagement which is of utmost requirement for any rural area to develop. The representatives have had vast experiences for over 20 years in the field and continue to do the same for the furtherance of their communities.

Highlights of the panel:

- Spreading the importance of nature and teaching humans the value of sustenance
- The panel was addressed with the need for community conservation
- Conservation of species in the ecosystem through indigenous people of the communities
- Importance and role of forests located in various parts of the North-East India such as the Mawphlang Sacred Grove (along with its sanctity)
- The importance of the role of leaders from communities to play dual roles of conserving rural ecosystems integrated with the task of balancing incorporating economy
- Encouraged the people of his community to avoid cutting trees, trained indigenous people and educated them about mindful tourism in congruence to tradition
- The difficulties of the communities in terms of livelihood generation, market linkage, gender-based occupation in rural areas
- The need for communities to be sensitized and aware of their surrounding and the benefits that they can acquire through traditional knowledge – leaving aside superstitious beliefs

 <https://bit.ly/2RgqjBE>



RURAL FUTURES:

NATURE TOURISM AS CONSERVATION



Objective:

- Understanding how tourism can be used to fuel conservation efforts and leveraging our rich natural heritage to generate alternate sources of revenue

Panel Speakers

Chair: Prabir Banerjea, Balipara Foundation, India

- *Bittu Sahgal, Sanctuary Asia, India*
- *Shankar Venkateswaran, India*
- *Kartik Shukul, India*
- *Tsering Wange, Himalayan Holidays*

The chair of the Nature Tourism Panel was Prabir Banerjea, Balipara Foundation. At the very onset of the panel discussion, Mr. Banerjea began by stating that “Ecotourism and sustainability are two of the most abused words that I can ever imagine.” Subsequently, Bittu Sahgal added to the former’s statement by narrating about life 5 years ago when he visited places like Ranthambore, Tadoba and how he wouldn’t see anything and would engage in a cheerful celebratory drink if he did see one tiger. To him, at that time, there were serious human rights violation without any concept of doing it the right way. Highlights of the panel:

- Injustices of yester years have to be addressed to fulfil the demands of the present times
- Eco-tourism must not only benefit the community but enhance the biodiversity as well
- Facilitators and implementor must fight ‘tourism trade’ most of the time
- The State should also play a role in promoting the concept of homestays
- The issue is that villages near biodiverse rich areas are often not equipped to run homestays
- In most of the North-Eastern states, the locals have ownership over their land leading to negotiations and mutual understands (that must be done at the village level)
- On the other hand, tourists are watchdogs in national parks, accounting for presence and absences of animals in parks
- Businesses define sustainability as potential future growth, growth forever, therefore it is necessary to define sustainability precisely



<https://bit.ly/2Anuzlk>



CHANGING PATTERNS OF RURAL LIVELIHOODS IN INDIA

Vishal Massey, Club of Rome, India



Vishal Massey addressed the issues of and challenges of the changing patterns of livelihoods in Rural India. According to Mr. Massey

- The Indian economy should be sustainable, and the perspective of rural livelihoods should change as time progresses
- A worldwide phenomenon of generating income in a sustainable manner, which was developed in America and other European countries having single contribution in GDP
- There is a need for diversification of the household income and the people in rural India now have a variety of options/ opportunities or other sources of income besides agriculture – to help upgrade their means of earning a sustainable source of livelihood
- Mr. Massey has expressed their passion and goal, which has turned into their main aim: focusing on India as a solar energy capital
- Solutions such as focusing on underdeveloped areas, investments in resource regeneration, extensive research or work on soil and environment, cleaner energy in the manufacturing of materials



<https://bit.ly/2rdPU2N>

GRASSROOTS INITIATIVES ON MANGROVE ECOSYSTEM CONSERVATION THROUGH EDUCATION & LIVELIHOOD

Md. Maksudur Rahman, Bangladesh Environment and Development Society, Bangladesh



Md. Rahman began his talk with an introductory note on the beautiful Sundarbans. It is a UNESCO and RAMSAR Heritage Site with around 3.5 million people completely depending on the forest for their existence. Md. Rahman elaborated on the following:

- Intrinsic role of the forests in protecting the people of the communities from any form of natural calamities
- There seems to be no awareness in terms of conserving these forests and a lack of empathy towards the Earth
- The prevailing issues in the region are poverty, cyclones, rising sea level, water salinity, water shortage (for drinking), lack of electricity and river bank erosion



<https://bit.ly/2zrAzjv>



THE FUTURE OF SHIFTING CULTIVATION

Dietrich Schmidt – Vogt, University of Freiburg, Germany



The question that was placed before the participants and speakers at the Forum by Dietrich Schmidt – Vogt was regarding the relevance of shifting cultivation in the context of building Rural Futures.

- A definition of ‘**Swidden Cultivation**’ or shifting cultivation by Mr. Dietrich – it is an agricultural system in which land under natural vegetation is cleared, burnt and cultivated
- Extensive research on shifting cultivation for a long span of time
- He noticed that the women who were engaged in this agricultural practice cut trees of a certain diameter. Subsequently, he also realized that these trees being cut had certain characteristics: they were not very tall, easy to cut down and of a diameter

Keeping an open mind during his field visits, Mr. Dietrich realized that agroforestry is a viable alternative to shifting cultivation. However, to utilize the resources available within a landscape it would be important to map any form of alternate resources as well.



<https://bit.ly/2FQJaIA>

RURAL FUTURES: UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME

Anindita Roy Saha, Indraprastha College for Women, India



UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME – A CONDITION FOR HUMAN FREEDOM?

Anindita Roy Saha, with a background in Economics put forth a question to the participants at the Eastern Himalayan Naturenomics™ Forum incorporating the idea of development as a form of freedom. The idea of Universal Basic Income is to provide a guaranteed income to the people of a country and this income is to be provided by the state. The arguments that have been put forth for Basic Income are as follows:

- To rectify the point of ‘inequality’
- Ownership of the Earth
- Benefits to economically and socially disadvantaged
- Avoid indignity by clarifying if UBI is going to be a subsidy or an allowance
- Lesser burden to pay all, than to accept the social evils of poverty



<https://bit.ly/2Kxsdv5>



BASIC INCOME AND RIGHT TO WORK

**SPONTANEOUS DISTRIBUTION
OF WORK**

**BETTER ACCESS TO
EMPLOYMENT FOR MANY
INDIVIDUALS**

**PERMITTING GREATER
FLEXIBILITY IN THE JOB
MARKET**

**REINFORCEMENT OF
BARGAINING POWER**

**MOTIVATING VOLUNTARY
WORK**

**RECOGNISING DOMESTIC
WORK - EMPOWERING MEN
AND WOMEN**



BASIC INCOME FOR INDIA

**RESERVATION POLICY AS AN
ISSUE**

**RS. 12 LAKH CRORE ALLOCATED
IN THE 2018 BUDGET FOR 1000
SPONSORED SCHEMES**

**LOWER COST & WIDER CHOICE
THAN THE PUBLIC
DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM**

**CONSENSUS NEEDED AND
GROUNDWORK NEEDS TO BE
STRONG**

**THE POOREST OF THE POOR
COULD BE TAKEN CARE OF**

**FRICION IN SOCIETY MAY
REDUCE**

**A STEP TOWARDS GANDHIAN
IDEOLOGIES OF A CASTELESS
SOCIETY**



RURAL FUTURES: HUMAN-CENTRED GEOLOGY

Sunayana Sarkar, NMIMS University, India



Sunayana Sarkar representing NMIMS University put forth the idea of Rural Futures through the lens of “Human Centred Geology”. Some of the issues that could be looked into in the Eastern Himalayas are: neo tectonics and the kinematics in the Shillong Plateau, apply the Plate Tectonic Theory in the Eastern Himalayas. According to Sarkar, there has to be a comparative study done based on the tectonic movements in the Eastern Himalayas:

- Convergent movements – where two plates are pushing away from each other
- Transform – where two plates slide past each other

PECULARITIES IN THE EASTERN HIMALAYAS

**GEOGRAPHICALLY
 INTRICATE, IMBRICATE
 AND INACCESSIBLE**

**7TH LARGEST
 SEDIMENT INFLUX**

**PRESENCE OF RIVER
 ISLANDS OVER 25
 YEARS**

**LARGEST OIL FIELDS IN
 AN UNSUAL
 SEISMICALLY ACTIVE
 ZONE**



<https://bit.ly/2r2TH2E>

ANALYSIS OF WILDLIFE NEWS COVERAGE IN AN ENGLISH DAILY OF ASSAM

Rakhee Sharma, Cotton University, India



Newspapers have had an important role in the lives of people ever since its inception. Rakhee Sharma an enthusiastic, hardworking young woman took up a topic that not many people showed interest to research on: *Analysis of wildlife news coverage in an English Daily of Assam*. Over 5 years of sample collection and calculation on the giant media outlet ‘The Assam Tribune’ she was surprised to the core.

- The maximum number of Wildlife news that was reported was in 2013 and the numbers have been declining ever since, the list news reports were made in 2017
- This is proof how news outlets only focused on mainstream topics and targets masses to grow their empire
- Media shows us what they want and therefore our interest shifts in that direction
- Conflict of interest among the audience is also an issue, leading to the ‘dominance of mainstream media’



<https://bit.ly/2RbgyV6>



CONSERVATION EDUCATION AT THE JAPANESE ZOOS

Misako Namiki, Tokyo University, Japan



Biodiversity conservation requires conservative psychology to be a part of the education system. This incorporation of conservation in the education systems all over the world shall help in bringing about change in the human lifestyle.

- Japan has extensive wildlife inclusive of polar bears and koalas
- The spaces that have been created for them are very naturalistic along with a healthy nutrition and proper company to provide a sense of belonging
- This helps them respond to their immediate environment
- The zoos in Japan use program tools which entail observation worksheets. This observation inevitably helps to understand animals in their own habitat, without being disturbed

There are discussions held on various perspectives of wildlife behaviour, thus leading to an understanding of the need to conserve nature. The ultimate goal should be to use the study of psychology to conserve and change the world.



<https://bit.ly/2DHxWge>

UNDERSTANDING THE DEPENDENCIES OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES ON RESOURCES OF DEEPOPOR BEEL

Jitul Kalita, Cotton University, India



Mr. Kalita started his speech with a situation which left the hall confused. What if all the people present lose their jobs, all of a sudden? What if the government bans the only thing, they are skilled at doing?

- Villages around the Beel, which depend on fishing for their livelihoods, find themselves in the exact same situation when the Government of Assam banned fishing from the Deepor Beel in 2009
- A village comprising of 975 families near Azara was chosen with the objectives of evaluating the depth between the Beel and the locals and to reduce the gap between the Beel authority and the locals
- The study concludes that 73.33% families take fish from the Beel, 66.67% families have fishing as their primary occupation and 93.93% of the people agree to the decrease of fish due to the degrading quality of the lake water. Mainly, 90.9% of them feel the need for conservation!



<https://bit.ly/2FHpiBc>



ESSENCE OF NATURE

Kalpesh Popat, Saras Ennovations, India

Mr. Popat, emphasized on the following:

- ‘Relationships of humans with nature should be more desirable and are more profitable than Theoretical science with nature’. The Definition of relation, when one looks it up in a dictionary, is something only good for law firms and administrative systems
- Relations are defined as somethings, which are blood related, or maybe having contractual friends
- A Relation. is an activity that one does engages in and feels deeply about
- It is not something that is bounded across time and space
- We need to change the outlook of life, from a complex relation with nature, to a simpler one



<https://bit.ly/2P0C79b>

RURAL FUTURES: THE MEANING OF EDUCATION



<p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To Explore best ways to make conservation education through art widespread across schools
<p style="text-align: center;">Panel Speakers</p> <p>Chair: Kelli Rogers, Devex, Thailand</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt Gen Arun Kumar Sahni • Anish Andheria, Wildlife Conservation Trust, India

Kelli Rogers began the session on the context of communication, peer to peer education, need for children to experience workshops and learn from them based on elephant conservation as well. She emphasized the need for an educational environment which would include a lens which would allow children to envision our ecosystem in a positive manner.

According to Anish Andheria, the focus needs to be on “conservation education” in the rural sector. The phenomenon of this type of education requires proper market survey along with efficient implementation. The children in a way are also made to feel important as they are given a platform to express themselves in whatever way possible – that their perspective matter in bringing about better change.

In the panel Lt. Gen. Arun Kumar Shani shared his experience and expertise of being in the army. It helped him to see a lot of what happened in India. According to him, art being a medium of education could help in heaps when it comes to conservation. He went on to talk about Gardner’s 7 distinct ways of connecting with students as they possess a different type of mindset. In the current types, education must have a culture to look through ideas.



<https://bit.ly/2TN6rrd>



RURAL FUTURES: ASIAN ELEPHANTS & COMMUNITIES



<p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To Explore ideas and solutions to preserve and conserve the Asian Elephants and integrate community development
<p>Panel Speakers</p> <p>Chair: K.K. Sharma, Assam Agricultural University, India</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jayanta Kr. Das, Assam Lisa Mills, University of Montana, USA Ranjan Barthakur, Green Guard Nature Organisation, India

K. K. Sharma or the Elephant Man of the country set the tone for the panel by stating the rationale for conserving elephants when in the perspective of communities and that is, elephants are thought to be “destructive” by nature. But at the same time, elephants have all the answers for us, vis a vis the recent discovery of a leukemia eliminating factor in elephant genes. Therefore, the question that was put forth by Mr. Sharma to the panel was regarding the co-existence and elimination of man-elephant conflict.

Lisa Mills stated a few probable solutions based on her experiences: organize people or create a voluntary support committee where the conflict was occurring to supply relief and support the Forest Department where necessary, education and awareness efforts with the youth and training women to create plant nurseries with native trees, which serves as an alternate livelihood opportunity and also as a means to reforestation of elephant habitats. According to her, the key challenge would be to keep the initiatives going once the funding is over. Following Ms. Mills, other members of the panel such as Jayanta Kumar Das and Ranjan Barthakur added very important elements on the context of elephants. They have stated the following points:

- Elephants are migratory creatures and it is impossible to stop human-elephant conflict as things stand, because of the proximity of habitats
- Education and awareness can mitigate the worst violence of human-elephant conflicts particularly through helping communities understand the importance of not trespassing on elephant habitat land and in finding ways to make their lives less vulnerable
- Human-elephant conflict is the result of a conflict of interests brought about by the resource crunch in habitat areas


<https://bit.ly/2S8uH5E>



RURAL FUTURES: WATER & SANITATION



Objective:
 To focus on traditional models of accessing water in the Eastern Himalayas and leveraging this knowledge to develop efficient systems

Panel Speakers

Chair: Rituraj Phukan, Walk for Water, India

- Ranjit Barthakur, India
- Md. Maksudur Rahman, Bangladesh Environment and Development Society, Bangladesh
- Lt Gen Arun Kumar Sahni

The session began with Founder and President of Balipara Foundation addressing the need for the civil society to pay more attention to the problem of aquifers. Water issues and sanitation are an important aspect in building Rural Futures. Women in rural areas in today's day and age walk more than 7 kms one way to collect water for household usages. Besides that, there are other issues that were already mentioned by Komisson Mili about the usage of river water or ground water which is highly contaminated leading to water borne diseases.

Rituraj Phukan, Md. Maksudur Rahman and Lt. Gen. Arun Kumar Sahni addressed some very pertinently common yet important issues at the panel such as those of the following:

- We should be in a condition to give immediate help to areas that may be going through a drought like condition in India
- We should be learning from natural disasters such as those of the Kerela Floods and have disaster management sessions so as to provide help
- Are all states in India aware of the high-water stress situation leading to Shimla stopping its highest earning potential – tourism

If we do not take action from now, the panel at the forum gave a red signal, alarming the audience and participants along with community people to take the matter in their hands. There might even come a time when there might be water wars at the Ganga – Brahmaputra valley.


<https://bit.ly/2r76CAI>




**EASTERN HIMALAYAN
 NATURENOMICS™ FORUM**
 — 2018 —

RURAL FUTURES: LAW & CONSERVATION



Objective:

To explore reforms required in governance & policy that will have lasting impact on making conservation more participatory

Panel Speakers

Chair: Anindita Phukan, Altum Law, India

- Rohit Choudhury, India
- Prasant Choudhury, India
- Surendra Kumar, India
- Kartik Shukul, India

According to Kartik Shukul, there is an incoherencies in the Wildlife Protection Act, which prevents both police and forest officers from being able to successfully press charges against poachers because of contradictory mapping of their responsibilities, despite the relaxed evidence norms and stringent conviction and sentencing procedures. There is a need to empower field staff in their investigation efforts and to train them in the charge sheet filing process. A potential solution is the establishment of a special cell for wildlife protection which includes police, forest officers, indigenous & local communities who can work together to stop poachers.

Surendra Kumar on the other hand stated that there needs to be a focus on securing fast convictions. Fast convictions can serve as strong deterrents to future poaching activities. He went on to propose a different type of a solution where the forest officers could investigate wildlife and the police officers could work in liaison with them. He went on to state that there must be a time limit to the investigations.

Rohit Choudhury and Prashant Choudhury spoke about the role of border forces, introduction of reforms like those in Kaziranga, sensitization of the issues to be brought into attention by the state and so on. Towards the end of the panel discussion, Anindita Phukan concluding in these lines: “When implementation of laws are bad, corruption enters the system and implementation is often poor because of political reasons. The only way to make sure this work is to make everyone believe in something; to give them a stake in this particular subject. It is crucial to find ways of valuing wildlife that goes beyond the issue of mere money because once you ascribe money values to wildlife, you step on to a slippery downward slope.”



<https://bit.ly/2PXCgDw>



RURAL FUTURES: A ROADMAP TOWARDS LIVELIHOODS THROUGH NATURE CAPITAL

Saurav Malhotra, Balipara Foundation, India



Mr. Malhotra started his part with a short documentary on the Eastern Himalayan Botanic Ark, a garden established in 2016. He talks about its plan of 6 years to plant a million trees in the Arunachal - Assam border. What people can do to help these organizations is to focus on converting natural capital into money. Their focus should be Universal Basic Income and Universal Basic Assets. According to Mr. Malhotra, the roadmap to Rural Futures entail the following:

- Nature capital as a means to achieving universal basic income
- A retrospective of the Udalguri Landscape Mission & Rural Futures as an experiment in social sciences towards building habitats for co-existence between species and humans
- The question is one of converting nature capital to money for facilitating social delivery
- Nature capital and forest capital to develop universal basic assets and use these to deliver various holistic development indicators (health; WASH; etc.)



<https://bit.ly/2P3J7Ca>

WESTERN CENTRIC APPROACH & LOCAL/CULTURAL NATURE

Rolf Von Bueren, Lotus Arts de Vivre, Thailand



Rolf Von Bueren is a person of inspiration with keen interest in Politics, Social Changes and History. For years western hegemony has prevailed, taking on the world. But Mr. Bueren thinks times are changing and soon the power will shift on Eastern side as countries like India and China are flourishing in various spectrums of globalization. An important question is how these upcoming governments will utilize their resources and natural capital to their benefit and also keep conservation in mind. Benefit of the locals should be the main agenda and to save the dying culture of self-sufficiency.

A very important question is how capital and the shift in capital from hands of the giants will have an impact on who will be shaped as the new superpower. Mr. Bueren believes the local culture in India is becoming extinct and if they are not preserved one day, they will become history. The politicians and bureaucracies are only reacting to people but not acting without invitation and that is one of the root causes why countries take time to develop.

Rolf Von Bueren also said, “many years ago I met a Chinese violinist who told me that some decades later all great violinists are going to be of Asian origin and I thought what nonsense!”. That is the truth of the world today. But what does the future hold for us?



<https://bit.ly/2r7E0Hz>



RURAL FUTURES:

NATURE CAPITAL

Anirban Ghosh, Mahindra Group, India



Mr. Anirban Ghosh began his talk on Nature Capital by trying to make the august audience understand the trade-off between sustainability, population and development. So the point that was raised by him was regarding this “questionable” trade-off or can we possibly look into other ways of leveraging sustainability.

Bringing in the context of implementation, Mr. Ghosh clearly stated that the Forum was engulfed with individuals who were very engaged in the field and have brought about possible results in the communities and their respective areas of work. Therefore, instead of trying to what may be important – he wanted to know what could be done soon.

He raised questions like “How long will these hills in Guwahati be there with an ever-increasing population?” But in a Forum addressing Rural Futures, Mr. Ghosh was talking about Guwahati, which is clearly an urban set up because, the 70% of India which is living in the rural areas are gradually migrating to urban areas for better opportunities. So, another questionable matter at hand that was put forth by Mr. Ghosh was “whether we are moving towards a dystopian reality?”

Subsequently, the need to conserve our natural resources largely revolves around the need to respect our forests instead of turning them into commercial money-making sanctuaries.

Therefore, we must be a level of awareness on the consequences that has to be followed up with conservation practices as a part of our everyday life. Mahindra Group has therefore, taken up the initiative to plant trees which is the only way to absorb all the carbon dioxide in the air. They have planted about 2 million trees and plan to plant another 15 million trees in the next few years. He ended his talk by stating how natural resources are free for use but only when we feel that these resources are becoming less and less as the days go by, that we start to live within our means.


<https://bit.ly/2TIPLRM>



UNDERSTANDING & ADOPTING

PARTICIPATORY PRACTICES:

RURAL WORKSHOP

Praxis Institute for Participatory Practices, India



The workshop by Praxis Institute of Participatory Practices began with a film made in the 1990's. The concept of the workshop revolved around the idea of participation and rapport building in terms of rural development. Very often barriers are created between people working for the same cause but under a “structure”. As mentioned in the workshop, it is always very easy to externalize these barriers and not address them. But on the contrary, somewhere down the line as members of the civil society and those who want to make a change, must trigger a bit of thinking which would eventually lead to a more transparent and accountable way of working on the change that we keep addressing.

So the question that was raised with regard to participatory methods were about the “WALLS” – which may be created by us or created in the process of it all. In short: **How do communities get affected by the ways in which we work as an organization or an individual?**

Some of the answers acquired are as follows:

- Learning in the process of interacting with communities starts at a later stage which is not right.
- We need to talk about our failures than our achievements

Furthering the workshop, it was brought to our attention that there are different ways of working that we are accustomed to and thus, these systems need change in the most positive manner. The change will allow to break the barriers. **Can there be ways of breaking barriers so as to design, measure and create projects? How willing are we to make transitions?** These are some of the points given for PRA tools and methods:

- Mapping for better policy changes and data collection of the reality
- Time based and year-based mapping of resources
- Relational or problem trees for groups to come up with their solutions and causal factors (for clear vision and complexities)
- Local material usage: to let communities know that they may have more knowledge about their space – so involve different types of groups to engage



SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE

PLANNING FOR

RURAL FUTURES

Chitranjan Kaushik, Ecofirst Services Limited, India

Pragyan Kalita, Ecofirst Services Limited, India



According to Mr. Chitranjan and Mr. Kalita it is important to take livelihoods to villages. By shaping architecture and villages spaces we can create model villages. For this to happen, it's crucial to create certain benchmarks to create a method of standardization for a model village.

The core issues at present is equipping villages for handling economic, social and climate resilience issues. These ideal villages are not a pipe-dream, but already exist e.g. Malgudi in 1943.

An example model was demonstrated with features such as ecological barriers to keep elephants out of villages, a single branch road with various amenities along it and a community fishery.

Every village must have elements which provide for food security, water and energy access, education and healthcare, carbon footprint minimization and zero waste. This can be achieved through collaborative and consultative processes with unique models and elements for different villages and differently prioritized implementation processes tailored to the most pressing needs of an area. It requires a three-pronged intervention strategy – Design/Socio-economic and Technological Interventions

- Design Strategy: includes the process of village planning. Through this process various individual village concerns and their distinct qualities will be unearthed and centred through the design process
 - Also includes climate responsive architecture and conservation practices, mixed with zoning regulations that guide the organic growth of a village
 - Designs must mitigate disaster



<https://bit.ly/2TL1a3z>



THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS IN CONSERVATION

Maria’s Public School, Guwahati, India: Nellie Ahmed Tanveer, Biswajit De, Upasna Patgiri



The talk included a brief history of conservation efforts by Marias Public School, beginning with nature-centric education in its early days and transitioning to field-based activities such as GPS mapping and geotagging photos of species in the nearby reserve, knowledge-sharing and exchange with village schools and then later, across national and international borders.

Maria’s Public School have their own Botanic Centre in North India, where they engage with schools from nearby locations, engaging in the idea of collaboration to bring about a change in the communities. They believe in the concept of “Learning outside the classroom”, bringing about a holistic development within the students and teachers.



<https://bit.ly/2S8tCL8>

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL: CAN SMALL TEA FARMS OF UDALGURI ENVISAGE SMART RURAL FUTURES?

Jatin Bavishi, APPL Foundation, India



Mr. Bavishi began with the idea that just because something is small, it does not really mean that it isn’t great or good. Keeping this context in the platform, the participants and speakers were made to feel that anything and everything that may be small in nature, growing in our environment may also have some value to it. By subtly bringing in the idea of tea and the tea industry, Jatin stated that in the current times the tea industry is going through a transitional phase.

But there are challenges faced by the farmers in Udalguri such as militancy, climate change, poor communities and so on. Udalguri faces various local and global challenges which are interlinked. Many rural features can be envisaged which will have major implications on the livelihoods, social relations and other factors like production and distribution.



<https://bit.ly/2z1K8jZ>



RURAL FUTURES:

TRANSFORMATION

OF TEA



Panel Speakers

- **Chair: Mike Korchinsky, Wildlife Works, U.S.A**

- **Ketan Patel, Jalinga Tea Estate, India**
- **Conrad Dennis, APPL, India**
- **Disha Barooah, Serenytea, India**
- **Lisa Mills, University of Montana, USA**

Ketan Patel began the session with the ideas of transforming tea in context of Jalinga Tea Estate with the help of a few pointers such as those of carbon credit, creating climate friendly tea, organic technology, having farmer zones and so on. Adding to Mr. Patel, Mr. Dennis thought it to be important that we start shifting away from traditional methods of producing tea so as to address various issues that exist in the current times.

Disha Barooah, who is setting a tone of her own in the tea industry of Assam, stated that the marketing of tea entails a story which helps the people to connect to it and thus leading to its growth. The tea business according to her should not be a business but a culture that could be understood. There is also a need for our consumers to be educated leading to a healthy market and also to increase the availability of tea in every outlet possible.

Lisa Mills concluded the session by adding her perspective on the need for appositive value chain for the tea industry to transform – this in a way will help change the outlook towards tea in general. Tea should not be a reason for man-animal conflict, keeping a balance in nature.



<https://bit.ly/2PSxnal>



RURAL FUTURES: MOUNTAIN FUTURES & ETHNOBOTANY

Jianchu Xu, Kunming Institute of Botany, China



- In China, according to Professor Xu anyone who chooses to live in the mountains are either criminals and or those running away from war.
- Mountains have a long history in terms of ecological processes along with high biological and cultural diversity.
- Pillars of mountain Futures for our wealth, our health our beauty and congruence between our living things and the country: microbes, plants, fungi, invertebrates and vertebrates.
- Professor Xu also highlighted the very challenges of creating a sustainable mountain future, such as climate change and poverty.
- Innovative solutions will be the ultimate key to Mountain Futures.
- Education for conservation is the best way to emphasize and sensitize the masses.


<https://bit.ly/2Al81Yy>

THE GEF-SATOYAMA PROJECT: BRINGING LANDSCAPES AND SEASCAPES TO THE CENTRE OF CONSERVATION

Yoji Natori, Conservation International Japan, Japan



Mr. Yoji began his talk with the components of the project: Landscape knowledge generation, Capacity building, Outreach.

He went on to emphasize on the need for institutional engagement by allowing different partners from various countries to collaborate and contribute to help landscape and seascape patterns to come under one umbrella concept of conservation Mr. Yoji also helped the participants to understand better, the nature of the project which is to provide the Japanese landscape with socio-ecological production. Some of the aspects that are covered under the GEF-SATOYAMA project are as follows:

- Sustainable development
- Issues of SEPCS
- Uses of SEPCS
- Governance and policy making.


<https://bit.ly/2DIRy3Q>



CLEANOPOLIS

Richard Leitch, UK



Prokash Dutta, India



Cleanopolis is a concept that has its establishment in Balipara, Assam. It tries to turn biodegradable waste into energy or rather electricity.

The production of methane on the other hand is more and the plan by 2025 is to reduce hydrocarbons. The technology of mini biodigesters was introduced by Tezpur University, located in Tezpur.

The project is also a zero-waste enterprise and is designed in such a way that it will lead to the creation of clean energy.

“SUSTAINABILITY – THROUGH ENCOMPASSING ENVIRONMENTAL EQUITY AND ECONOMY”



<https://bit.ly/2S8akW0>



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12 Categories

16 Winners



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The Annual Balipara Foundation Award
Md Maksudur Rahman

The Annual Balipara Foundation Award has been accorded to Md. Maksudur Rahman for social impact in Bangladesh and preserving the bio-cultural heritage of the Sunderbans through his organization Bangladesh Environment and Development Society. The award was presented by Mike Korchinsky, Wildlife Works, USA



Naturenomics™ Award
Narmohan Das

Naturenomics™ Awardee Narmohan Das has pushed the boundaries of sustainability by propagating the production of Ahimsa Silk and creating a circular economy within the silk industry. The award was presented by Haiya Zhang, World Agroforestry Centre, China



The Green Journalist Award
Uttam Saikia

The Green Journalist Award was accorded to Honorary Wildlife Warden of Kaziranga, Uttam Saikia for educating the forest department through his knowledge and a deep-rooted empathy towards the World Heritage site. This Award was presented by Prof. Misako Namiki from Teikyo University, Japan



Eastern Himalayan Conservation Award
Tambor Lyngdoh

Tambor Lyngdoh was accorded the Eastern Himalayan Conservation Award for his contribution towards socio-economic development of forest fringe communities of Mawphlang, Meghalaya. The award was presented by Sunayana Sarkar, an ethno-geologist from Assam, India



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Allowing a safe passage to gentle giants in one of the most affected human-elephant conflict zones, Udalguri, tea planter and Habitat Conservation Awardee. Tenzing Bodosa has begun a silent revolution by producing Elephant Friendly tea. The Award was presented by Thu Zaw, Chief Executive, Sithar Coffee



Dimbeshwar Rabha was accorded the Food for the Future Award for his innovative idea of growing black pepper as an alternative source of livelihood through Small Farm Integration for Sustainable Agriculture and approved access to market project. The Award was presented by Jackie Leitch, Wild Mahseer, India



Protecting the wildlife of Fakim Sanctuary, Forest Rangers & Guards of the Eastern Himalayas Awardee Alemba Yimchunger is an inspirational nature lover who goes beyond the call of duty to preserve nature. The Award was presented by Alistair Morris, University Parks Department, UK

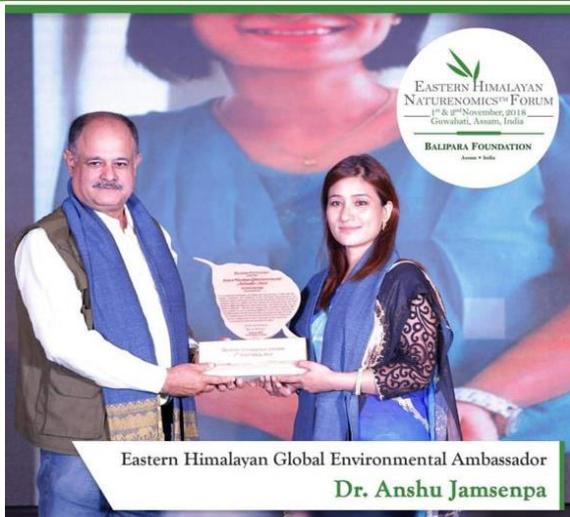


Forest Rangers & Guards of the Eastern Himalayas awardee Dorji Wangchuk from Bhutan has contributed to the social development of forest fringe communities around the Royal Manas National Park and helped Bhutan realize its goal to double the tiger population by 2020 by preserving the animal. The Award was presented by Aneeta Dutta, RGVN, India



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Eastern Himalayan Global Environmental Ambassador
Dr. Anshu Jamsenpa

Mountaineer and Himalayan lover, Dr. Anshu Jamsenpa from Arunachal Pradesh, Special Awardee Eastern Himalayan Global Environmental Ambassador, is the only woman in the world to ascend Mt. Everest twice in 5 days. The Award was presented by Assam's Elephant Man, Dr. K.K. Sarma, India



Agricultural Revolution in Balipara County Award
Mehdi Arif Hussain

Special Award- 'Agricultural Revolution in Balipara County' was accorded to Mehdi Arif Hussain from Assam. The Award was presented by Prof. Kalpana Sarathy, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India



Eastern Himalayan Sports Development Award
High-Altitude Training Centre

High Altitude Training Centre, Mizoram was accorded the 'Special Awardee Eastern Himalayan Sports Development Award', which provides grassroots training to the youth of Mizoram and ample green space. The award was presented by film producer, Roopa Barua, Assam, India



Cross-Country Preservation of the Eastern Himalayan Award
Purshoram Choudary | Shankar Choudary
Raj Kumar Choudary | Lokhan Choudary

Purshoram Choudary, Shankar Choudary, Raj Kumar Choudary, Lokhan Choudary, the three generation boatmen, are the Cross-Country Preservation of the Eastern Himalayan Awarders. The Award was presented by Dr. Dietrich Schmidt Vogt, Germany, Richard Leitch, Indonesia, Dr. Parmanandu Rajbongshi, Assam and Ranjit Barthakur, Assam



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Lifetime Service Award
Usha Lachungpa

The first Indian lady to do a Wildlife and Research Management course, Lifetime Service Awardee, Usha Lachungpa is a Green Crusader carrying forward the bio-cultural heritage of the Eastern Himalayas through knowledge and awareness. The award was presented by Diana Owen, Royal Overseas League, UK

6th Rabindranath Barthakur Memorial Lecture

By

Dr. Kamaljit Singh Bawa



Biodiversity and Our Future



<https://bit.ly/2r5IBLt>



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KNOWLEDGE PLATFORMS & PUBLICATIONS Launched at the forum

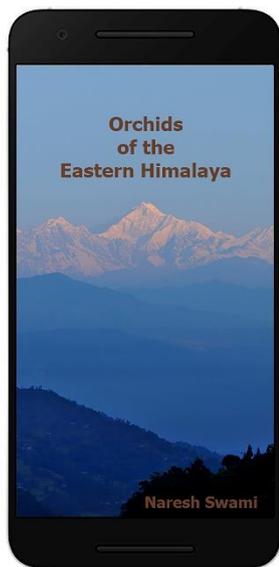


“Nameri National Park Guidebook” at Eastern Himalayan Naturenomics™ Forum 2018. The guidebook is a document on the denizens of the little explored national park by Sanctuary Asia

“League of Earth Heroes” by Balipara is a documentation of eco-crusaders of the Eastern Himalayas, who are doing extraordinary things to preserve the environment



<https://bit.ly/2KyCMOW>



A first of its kind mobile application on orchids – “The Orchids of the Eastern Himalaya” was launched at the Forum

This application intends to present all the orchids in the region of Eastern Himalaya, comprising almost 1500 species



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COMMUNICATIONS FOOTPRINT

OUR GLOBAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS FOOTPRINT

**LIVE DIGITAL
TELECAST**




<https://bit.ly/2KGRyTl>

646K Subscribers
4.4K Views

**GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT
NEWS- DEVEX**




<https://bit.ly/2DQ3nFf>

1Million Subscribers

OUR TELEVISION MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS FOOTPRINT

NEWS



EVENT COVERAGE ON

- DD National
- Pratidin Times
- News Live
- North East Live

TV TICKERS



TELEVISION TICKERS (15 DAYS IN OCTOBER & DURING THE EVENT)

- Pratidin Times
- News Live



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STUDIO & DIGITAL INTERVIEWS WITH GLOBAL EXPERTS

NEWS LIVE



PRATIDIN TIMES



PRAG NEWS



- STUDIO INTERVIEWS
- DD National
- Pratidin Times
- Talk time with Wasbir Hussain
- Prag News
- News Live

- DIGITAL INTERVIEWS
- YouTube

 **PLAYLIST 2018 -** <https://bit.ly/2Az0iGB>

LIVE ON EAST MOJO
8K Followers
515 Views

OUR PRINT MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS FOOTPRINT

PRINT COVERAGE IN LEADING NEWSPAPERS

- 3 Press Conferences the Forum
- 32 articles in leading publications in English, Hindi & Assamese
- 4 Prime Time Television Interviews
- Assam Tribune
- Telegraph
- Sikkim Express

READ LITERATURE <https://bit.ly/2r2MwaO>

RADIO JINGLES ON NORTHEAST CHANNELS





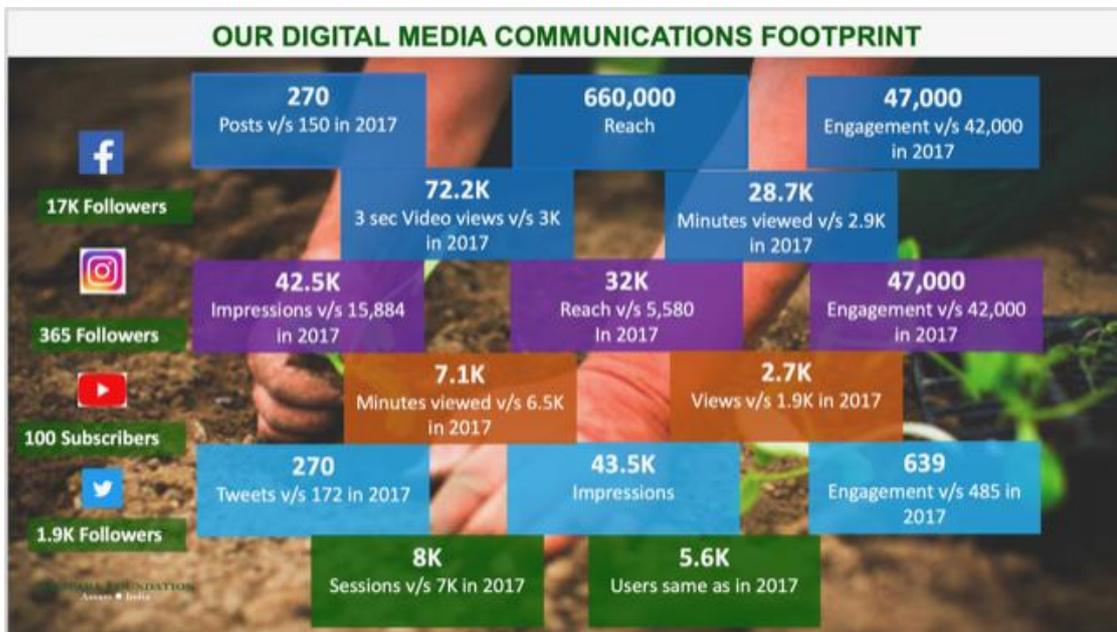






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KEY INFLUENCERS AT THE EASTERN HIMALAYAN NATURENOMICS™ FORUM

INFLUENCERS

- Dr. Anish Andheria, Wildlife Conservation Trust
- Bittu Sahgal, Founding Editor, Sanctuary Asia
- Dr. Neiphu Rio, Chief Minister, Nagaland
- Priyanka Yoshikawa, Miss World Japan, 2016

ORGANIZATIONS

Top Follower followed by 4,803 people

Anish Andheria
@anishandheria FOLLOW YOU
President - Wildlife Conservation Trust, Conservationist, Naturalist, Conservation Biologist, Wildlife Photographer, Author & Single Malt Aficionado

Bittu Sahgal shared a link.
Thursday at 08:43 · QR

Robin Eastment and 4 others · 1 Comment

Neiphu Rio @neiphu_rio

I congratulate Alemba Yimchunger, camp guide in Kiphire wildlife division for being conferred with 'Forest Rangers & Guards of the Eastern Himalayas' at the 6th Balipara Foundation Awards, for his outstanding efforts in protecting wildlife of Fakim Wildlife Sanctuary #Nagaland.

Tag your reply



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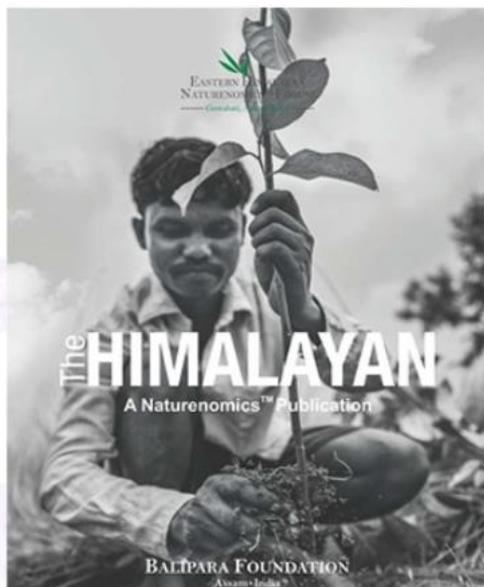
STORYTELLING IN CONSERVATION

In collaboration with Dakshin Foundation & Current Conservation Magazine, we hosted a workshop to engage with children to create education and awareness on Asian Elephant Conservation based on the different interactions of these children in urban and rural Assam



<https://bit.ly/2ShsqFq>

THE HIMALAYAN



Captures positive case studies, thought leadership, new discoveries and research papers on Rural Futures in the Eastern Himalayas



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THANK YOU TO ALL OUR PARTNERS

Few words from some of our partners



"The Forum this year saw a good mix of practicing conservationists, academicians, community leaders and youngsters- it was a good amalgamation of different streams and walks of life"

"TGBL supports in providing WASH facilities and behavioural change in tea communities of Assam. EHNH stands as a platform to spread the word about the challenges faced by the tea communities and building solutions for them".

TATA GLOBAL BEVERAGES



"The Eastern Himalayan Naturenomics™ Forum is an opportunity to discuss many issues on conservation, climate change and on bringing people and communities of the region since many years. We are proud to say that WWF India has been a partner since its inception".

"It was a great learning experience and a good platform for networking with so many eminent personalities. Despite all the complexities and intricacies, the event went extra mile and it was a grand success".



AMALGAMATED
PLANTATIONS

"It's the only Forum that brings people together from diverse disciplines with different approaches and perspectives. The importance of the Forum holds in exchange of ideas and information, possibility of networking and possibility of more collaboration and the only way to address problems is by working together".



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EASTERN HIMALAYAN NATURENOMICS™ FORUM

1st & 2nd November, 2018
Guwahati, Assam, India

NATURENOMICS™ SUPPORTERS



KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS



MEDIA SUPPORTER



DIGITAL PARTNER



