



## **ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION**

1. State Government passed and announced a Comprehensive State Policy on Forest, Environment and Land Use 2000 based on the basic principle of conservation and sustainability.
  2. **Forest Protection:** One of the main objectives of the Forest, Environment & Wildlife Management Department is the protection and management of forests, water bodies and alpine pastures. The State Government has brought about vital amendments in the present Sikkim Forest Water Courses and Road Reserve (Preservation and Protection) Act, 1988 (Amendment 2000) to make the specified clause more stringent and harsh in enforcement. Offences such as illegal felling of trees, encroachment and grazing in the Reserve Forest have been made non-bailable.
  3. **Infrastructure Development (Wireless Communication & Arms/ Ammunition):**  
The wireless communication has been strengthened further. Almost State-wide wireless networking has been achieved except a few locations like Lachen, Lachung, Lingmoo and a few other areas which are likely to be covered soon. Static sets, handsets mobile sets have been provided to all the field level functionaries for effective communication. In keeping with the requirements of modern policing functions of forest areas, the Government has also provided arms/ammunition to the field level staff. Arms/ammunitions have been provided to selected stations. Arms' training was done at SAP Headquarter, Pangthang. At present total (WT): Repeater sets – 5 nos, Static sets-43 nos, Handsets-73 nos along with accessories, total (Arms): .22 Rifle-25 nos, .315 Rifle-6 nos and 9mm auto pistol-9 nos along with ammunition.
  3. Mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)/ Environment Management Plan (EMP) and Catchment Area Treatment (CAT) Plan for all Hydro-Electric Projects (HEP) & Other Projects as well.
  4. Abandoned and closed the Rathang Chhu Hydro Electric Project in West and Firing Range "G" in North Sikkim.
  5. Notified in 2001, sacred peaks, caves, rocks, lakes, '*chhorten*' & hot springs and banned scaling of important peaks including Mt. Khangchendzonga (8598m) for mountaineering expeditions, etc., conservation of unique terrestrial & aquatic eco-system of wetlands/lakes by prohibiting the commercial activities to preserve the Heritage and fragile ecology.
  8. By legislation, banned the use of non-biodegradable materials like plastics, poly-bags, and Bio-medical / chemical waste.
  11. Export of timber outside the State is also banned.
  15. For Community participation in Forest, Environment & Wildlife and Natural resources Protection & Management has been institutionalized through the creation of network of JFMCs/ EDCs & WDCs along with the involvement of / NGOs / Panchayats with emphasis on women's participation.
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16. **Forest Fire Management:** A forest fire management policy has been developed in State to enable the Government to focus on fire prevention aspects and to coordinate efforts by various agencies towards this important function. The policy integrates modern fire fighting approaches with community based fire fighting strategies and is devised to preserve the unique biodiversity of the forests especially those of the lower altitudes. The policy provides for zoning of the forests on the basis of their vulnerability, assessed ecological impacts and intrinsic value so that different treatment can be meted out to the different zones.
  17. **Integrated Watershed Development Program** (IWDP) for Non-forest areas through the *Zilla Parishad* with more emphasis on fuel wood and fodder plantation to reduce pressure on natural forests and to enhance the productivity of land.
  18. For Perspective planning State Forestry Action Plan & State Forestry Research Plan were formulated in co-ordination with Government of India.
  19. A network Protected Area Network (PAN) of National Parks, Sanctuaries, Himalayan Zoological Park and Biosphere Reserve created for conservation of bio-diversity [PAN-30.69% (42.46% including Biosphere Reserve) of the Geographical Area]. By notification in 2001, imposed ban on tourists carrying plastic bags and containers in PAN.
  21. Sikkim State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (SBSAP) formulated under the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP).
  22. A State Biodiversity Park at Tendong first of its kind was created in 2001.
  24. In 2000, imposed ban on lopping of Dhupi tree (*Cryptomeria japonica*) and collection of Nagbeli (*Lycopodium*) & Mosses.
  25. All agencies in the State directed to use alternatives of wood in construction to conserve the forests and ecology.
  29. To avoid the Landslides/slips/erosion of areas, treatments and reclamation has been made an integrated part of project planning.
  31. In Urban and Semi-Urban areas the concept of Urban Forestry, Eco-cities & Eco-village has been developed and is under implementation.
  32. As per State Industrial Policy 1996, only eco-friendly, pollution free and Green industries would be encouraged.
  37. To reduce the dependence of villages on firewood and forests, Free LPG connection for people below poverty line and economically weaker section of society are being provided since 15th August 2002 under National Afforestation Programme through JFMCs and EDCs.
  40. Constitution of High Level Task Force (Environment Commission) for Environment and Natural Resources.
  41. **Sikkim Green Mission** – To Integrate the People with Nature & Invoke Mass Support for the cause. All road projects to have green/plantation components. 2% budget of SPWD(R&B) and RMDD and 1% of all other Departments have been earmarked for the Green Mission.
  42. **Sikkim State Biodiversity Board** constituted and Rules formulated.
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43. **Green Roads:** State highway from Damthang to Namchi declared as Eco-highway. All the Road construction agencies have been directed that the construction of road and their stabilization works along with plantation must go together.
  46. Capacity Building Programme: The State Government has given special emphasis on capacity building of all levels of employees and public as well. 2% budget of each department is earmarked for the purpose.
  47. Eco-Clubs, Green Funds created in a number of schools & colleges.
  48. Gangtok- MG Marg declared as “Spit Free Zone” to minimize the pollution.
  49. Sikkim Wildlife (Regulation of Trekking) Rules 2005, Guidelines for Appointment of *Himal Rakshak* 2006, *Pokhari Samrakshan Samiti* 2006, State Environment Agency 2006, Guidelines for Lake Conservation in partnership with Gram Panchayats and *Pokhari Samrakshan Samiti's* in Sikkim 2006, formulated.
  51. The State Government has decided that every family shall have FOUR DUSTBINS for disposal of different kinds of waste materials.
  52. Glaciers Study & Action Plan to take the timely action on the affect of Global Warming on our water resources, the State Government has decided to constitute an Expert Group for the purpose.
  55. Sikkim Ecology Fund and Environment Cess Act 2005 and the Sikkim Ecology Fund & Environment Cess Rules 2007 enforced from 1st April 2007.
  56. National Bamboo Mission Programme launched in the State for Development Bamboo Sector from 2007.
  57. Constitution of State Wetland Conservation Authority for protection, conservation and management of lakes and wetlands of Sikkim.
  58. Sir Chogyal Palden Thendup Namgyal Memorial Park near White Hall, Gangtok established.
  59. Saramsa Garden upgraded to International standards.
  60. Hydrangea Park and Bhanu Path upgraded with modern water fountain.
  61. *Hamro Van* and *Hariyali Sikkim* programmes on forest and environment launched for mass awareness through local cable TV.
  62. **Other initiatives taken by the Department:** Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management Department has taken up several other initiatives like creation of Bird Park at Rabdentse, Gyalshing, West Sikkim, creation of Butterfly Park of the State. The Bird Park will also have a Walk-in-Aviary to facilitate the visiting tourists to see different varieties of birds of Sikkim in the aviary. A master plan for development of the Himalayan Zoological Park is also being prepared for scientific management of the Zoological Park at Bulbulay, Gangtok.
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