

**One Day Awareness Programme for BMC Formation and Consultation meeting on *Yartsa Gunbu*
(Caterpillar-Fungus , a potential Bioresource) at Sherathang, East Sikkim: A Field Report**

A meeting on Biodiversity Management Committee formation and Access and Benefit Sharing was organized in Sherathang, East Sikkim in coordination with the Territorial Circle of Forest, Environment & Wildlife Management Department (FEWMD) and Sikkim Biodiversity Board was organized on 19 June 2016. Approximately 30 people were present during the meeting including representatives of Army, Border Roads Organization (BRO/GREF), and Sikkim Police, local Panchayat Members, Joint Forest Committee (JFMC) members and the local people of Sherathang. The meeting started with the welcome address by Range Officer (Kyongnosla Range) Shri Karma Sonam Bhutia.

Mrs. Usha Lachungpa, State Project Coordinator (UNEP-GEF-MoEF&CC-ABS Project) highlighted the participants about the Sikkim's biodiversity, Sikkim Biodiversity Board, Biodiversity Management Committee and its roles and responsibilities. She also highlighted the importance of People's Biodiversity Register (PBR) and stressed that every local body should prepare PBR containing all the information on biodiversity of the area and the traditional knowledge associated with it. This would help in claiming right over the resources in case of commercialization of bio-resources in future.

Dr. Bharat Kumar Pradhan, Scientific / Technical Assistant (UNEP-GEF-MoEF-ABS Project) talked about Access and Benefit Sharing mechanism and how the local community can benefit from it. He also highlighted the recently notified '**Yartsa Gunbu' (*Ophiocordyceps sinensis*) Harvesting and Auctioning Guidelines 2016** by FEWMD. As Yartsa Gunbu is a potential bio-resource having ABS potential, the local community can have long term benefit if they follow the guidelines properly. However, for giving effect to the guidelines, there is a need to form BMC in the area, he added.

The local community thanked the Sikkim Biodiversity Board for organizing such an eye opening meeting and they assured that they will pursue the constitution of Biodiversity Management Committee in the area as early as possible.

The meeting ended with the vote of thanks by the Joint Forest Management Committee President and short field visit to nearby sites.

Sd/-

Usha Lachungpa
AD, SBB cum SPC

Sd/-

Dr. Bharat Kr. Pradhan
Scientific/Tech. Asst, SBB