

### International Day for Biological Diversity (IBD) 2014 Celebrations

RCE Srinagar with CEE Himalaya ([www.ceeindia.org](http://www.ceeindia.org)) celebrated IBD 2014 on 22 May at several places across Indian Himalayan Region involving school children, teachers local NGOs and the community members. In Western Himalaya, in the state of Jammu & Kashmir, students and teachers of Sunrise Quality Public School, Baramulla planted saplings under the 'Green Wave' programme coordinated by CEE for the National Biodiversity Authority of India along with several other partner organizations. Students and their teachers (84 students supported by 3 teachers) formed 6 groups and each group planted a different variety of sapling of locally useful trees in their school premises. Students were told about the significance of the IBD, importance of biodiversity for our survival, threats to biodiversity in their locality and how they can contribute to help arrest the rapid decline of biodiversity. Impact of climate change on biodiversity was also discussed. The Himalayan region is prone to natural disasters and biodiversity conservation plays an important role in mitigating them.



development issues, particularly the conservation and sustainable use of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants followed by number of activities for students to help them understand the rich biodiversity of Indian Himalayan Region including that of Uttarakhand.

Chief Guest of the event was Mr. Gopal Thapliyal, Team Leader of Shri Bhubneshwari Mahila Ashram. After planting a sapling under the 'Green Wave' Mr. Gopal gave a speech on the importance of conservation of biodiversity and spoke that humans are responsible for the rampant destruction and loss of biodiversity. It is the prime responsibility of man to preserve and protect natural resources that are essential for the life and survival of human beings. Other speakers pointed out the fact that last year's Uttarakhand disaster happened due to excessive cutting and destruction of forests and also talked about the importance of mountains globally for the priceless ecological services offered to the world. Children were given the message about values of locally available Medicinal and Aromatic plants, taking care of natural water sources and rivers. Uttarkashi is land slide and earthquake prone area so we need to do plantation and take care of vegetation to reduce the risk of land slide was said by one of the participating students.

In Central Himalaya, in the state of Himachal Pradesh, celebrations were done in the cities of Hamirpur, Manali and Mandi. School children guided by their teachers planted saplings. In Hamirpur 2 schools, Him Academy Public School (49 students, 7 teachers) and GIC Kharwar (12 students, 2 teachers) participated in the plantation drive. In Mandi 8 students and 2 teachers of Abhilashi Institute of Pharmacy and Engineering planted saplings. In Manali 2 teachers and 8 students of Adarsh Vidya Niketan did plantation.

After the lecture sessions, students participated in various activities like Storytelling, Slogan writing, Group Discussion, Extempore speech, Painting on the theme of IBD 2014. Winners of the events were felicitated and given prizes by team CEE Himalaya.

CEE Himalaya has adopted GIC Maneri and GIC Jogath of Uttarkashi for reconstruction; both the schools were damaged in recent 16-17 June 2013 flash floods. JSW Foundation, India is providing the financial support for these interventions.

In Eastern Himalaya the celebrations were done in the states of Sikkim, Assam and Manipur. Besides planting trees, various competitions were organized. Teacher Training Workshops were also organized to give orientation to teachers on biodiversity conservation and linking classroom syllabus teaching with outdoor experience.

The IBD 2014 celebration was supported by JSW Foundation, Go-UNDP-GEF, and RCE network of the Institute of Advanced Studies of the United Nations University, Japan.

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Kumar Mahasaya Vidyalaya (10 students, 2 teachers), Saraswati Shishu Mandir (54 students and 7 teachers), and Saraswati Vidya Mandir (8 students, 2 teachers), and Government Inter College (12 students, 2 teachers), Government Girls' Inter College (38 students 3 teachers).

A detailed programme was organized involving 330 students and 20 teachers at Government Inter College Maneri, Uttarkashi, Uttarakhand. The programme included talks and sharing of thoughts by subject experts on mountain and sustainable

