

PRESS RELEASE

Green Film Festival and Forum Inaugurated at Gangtok

September 15, 2021

The three-day green film festival and forum being organised at Sidkeong Tulku Forest Conference Hall, Deorali, Gangtok. The festival began with a lamp lighting ceremony by all the eminent dignitaries present during the occasion.

After the introduction and welcome of guests by Mr Sabyesachi Bharti, Deputy Director, CMS VATAVARAN, Shri Udai Gurung, CF(WL)-cum-Nodal Officer, SECURE Himalaya-Sikkim set the context by mentioning that such Festivals and events as the one being carried out by CMSVATAVARAN presently are of utmost important for raising awareness regarding environmental aspects. He also explained about SECURE Himalaya project and its vital components focusing on sensitization of all concerned stakeholders.

The Inaugural Keynote address was given by Shri. M. L. Srivastava, IFS, ACS -cum- PCCF (Sikkim). He mentioned how our small acts can help in minimizing the effects of global warming. Conservation of energy and judicious use of natural resources are of utmost importance in the present scenario. We should retrospect our actions and work towards leading green lifestyle. He also requested the participants to interact with the resource persons to acquire maximum possible knowledge from the workshop.

This unique green film festival and forum is open for public from **September 15-17, 2021**. This is being organized by the GEF-GOI-UNDP SECURE Himalaya project of the Forest & Environment Department, Government of Sikkim, and CMS VATAVARAN. This is part of a series of '9th CMS VATAVARAN Travelling Film Festival and Forum' in four Himalayan cities of Uttarkashi, Gangtok, Shimla and Leh. The idea behind this festival and forum is to support this unique green movement for conservation through using films, festivals and forums. Outreach and engage with to cross section of stakeholders, including Government of India, Media, Conservation organizations, Experts, Academics, Corporations, Youth and general public and to provide a platform for showcasing the SECURE Himalayas initiatives and programs.

The inaugural ceremony was followed by Introduction of the workshop and importance of Environmental Storytelling and social media in the conservation efforts by Sabyesachi Bharti, Deputy Director, CMS VATAVARAN and the introduction of the **Green MOJO Filmmaking Workshop** conducted by Mr Ritesh Taksande, Faculty Member - SKIFT at Film and Television Institute of India, Mojo Educator, Film and Photography Educator. Participation certificates will be given to all the participants. The workshop will be continued till **16 September 2021**.

The festival will continue with the screening of SECURE Himalaya films along with selected awarded/nominated CMS VATAVARAN environmental films on various other relevant environmental issues like water conservation, wildlife conservation, climate change, forest conservation and livelihood & sustainable technologies on September 17, 10:00 AM to 5:30 PM at Sidkeong Tulku Forest Conference Hall, Deorali, Gangtok. On the spot quiz and drawing competition on environment for school children during film screenings are also being organized.

This will be followed by Award and closing ceremony.

For more information, please contact Mr. Sabyesachi Bharti, Deputy Director, CMS VATAVARAN: sabyesachi@cmsvatavaran.org, Mob: +91 9818367459

The Government of India and **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**, with support from the Global Environment Facility, are implementing a project in the high altitude Himalayas entitled “SECURE Himalayas (Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems), to ensure conservation of locally and globally significant biodiversity, land and forest resources in the high Himalayan ecosystem, while enhancing the lives and livelihoods of local communities. The project promotes sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems to secure conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats to ensure sustainable livelihoods and socio-economic benefits for communities in the selected high-altitude landscapes in the Trans- and Greater Himalayan regions. In Sikkim, the project is being implemented since 2018, focusing on the snow leopard habitats in North & West districts, covering an area of more than 4000 km².

CMS VATAVARAN is India’s premier environment and wildlife film festival and forum – it is aimed towards enhancing understanding, appreciation and shift in attitudes towards the natural world and to increase space for environmental issues in mass media and evolve a nationwide environment outreach framework. The festival taps into an important motivating factor for audiences everywhere: the emotional draw of connecting with a compelling story or character. The festival reaches out to people from all walks of life including filmmakers, civil society groups, government organizations, environmentalists, researchers, conservationists, policy makers, activists, public and private sector organizations and students of all ages and is recognized as a calendar event amongst filmmakers, environment, wildlife and conservation sector. Its unique twin track approach of organizing competitive and traveling film festivals and environment forum has positioned it as one of the most prestigious film festivals across the globe. Since its inception in 2002, ten competitive and 52 travelling festivals in 41 cities of 25 Indian states have been organized. Website: www.cmsvatavaran.org