



PRESS NOTE

BHUTAN-CMS VATAVARAN FESTIVAL & FORUM ON CLIMATE ACTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION, 2022

Bhutan, “the land of the Thunder Dragon” will be hosting it’s first-ever film festival and forum on Climate Action and Biodiversity conservation from the 2nd to the 7th of November in Thimphu and Paro.

Date-1.11.2022

Asia’s biggest Environmental Film Festival and Forum CMS VATAVARAN in collaboration with the Canadian High Commission of India and Bhutan, IUCN CEC, Royal Thimphu College (RTC), Thimphu and Norbuling Rigter College (NRC), Paro is organizing Bhutan’s first-ever film festival and forum on Climate Action and Biodiversity conservation at Royal Thimphu College (RTC) Thimphu from 2nd to 4th November and at the Norbuling Rigter College (NRC) Paro on 7th November.

The festival and forum aim to facilitate youth participation in planning, policy and action in conserving the rich natural resources and environmental heritage of this nation. It will have a series of several interesting programs which will cover film screenings, seminars, workshops, Panel discussions, etc. focusing on the environmental, social and economic aspects of Climate-Change and Biodiversity Conservation in the Greater Himalayan Region.

On this occasion, two prominent Bhutanese environmentalists Dr Nawang Norbu, Executive Director (Vice-President) of Bhutan Ecological Society and Dr Rebecca Pradhan, senior ecologist and botanist at the Royal Society for Protection of Nature Bhutan will be conferred upon the “**Bhutan CMS VATAVARAN Green Ambassador Awards**” for their contribution in the field of Biodiversity Conservation in Bhutan.

The inaugural ceremony will be followed by a series of panel discussions, seminars, green filmmaking workshops and master classes and short film competitions. Several eminent speakers i.e. **Mr Sean Southey** (Chair for the Commission on Education and Communication (IUCN-CEC) at the International Union for Conservation of Nature), **Mr Colin Shonk** (Counsellor and Head, Advocacy Programme: Public Diplomacy, Media, Academic & Cultural Relations at the High Commission of Canada in India and Bhutan), **Mr Chimi Rinzin** (Country Director, WWF Bhutan), **Ms P N Vasanti** (DG CMS), **Mr Dorji Dorji** (Acting Chief Program Officer, Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation), **Dr Shiva Raj Bhattarai, Dean (Academics)**, Royal Thimphu College and **Mr Rakesh Rao**, Sr. Environmental, Science and Conservation Filmmaker from India will be participating in it.

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The film festival will also screen a total of 25 international awarded winning films from different parts of the world on various relevant environmental issues like climate change & adaptation and mitigation, wildlife conservation, water conservation, forest conservation and sustainable livelihood.

Highlights of Bhutan CMS VATAVARAN 2022– At A Glance

Royal Thimphu College, Thimphu (2nd to 4 November 2022)

Norbuling Rigter College, Paro (7th November 2022)

- **Inaugural Ceremony.**
- **Green Ambassador Awards.**
- Opening Film Screening.
- Panel Discussion on **“Climate Change Challenges to sustainable agriculture, tourism, biodiversity and natural resources conservation in Bhutan.”**
- SEMINAR on **Communicating Conservation** by Sean Southey (IUCN, Chair) and Dr Vasanti Rao (DG, CMS).
- **Green Filmmaking Workshop** by the award-winning filmmaker from India **Mr Rakesh Rao.**
- Award-winning Film screenings on **Climate change, Biodiversity conservation, Water Conservation and Wildlife.**
- **Short Filmmaking** competition.
- **PSA filmmaking** Competition.
- **Valedictory & award** ceremony.

Speaking on this occasion, **Mr. Cameron MacKay**, Canada’s Ambassador said “I am delighted that Canada and Bhutan are further strengthening their relations and working together on the critical issues related to combatting climate change, preserving biodiversity, and protecting the environment. I encourage everyone to fully engage in the festival activities and take action to build a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable planet for future generations.”

Speaking on this occasion, RTC President **Mr Tshewang Tandin** said, “It is a privilege for RTC to be hosting the Bhutan CMSVATARAN Film festival and Forum on Biodiversity Conservation and Climate Action 2022. It blends well with our setting of pristine environment and learnings that happen here in our Environment management and Mass communication programmes. Such an engagement will inspire our students to align their lives to GNH and enable them to champion for biodiversity conservation and climate action to communities around the world”.



Speaking on this occasion, **Dr Vasanti Rao**, DG CMS said “A beautiful carbon-neutral country in the Himalayas, Bhutan, climate change is not just an environmental problem but a serious challenge to sustainable development. Communities are facing a range of climate-related dangers i.e. melting glaciers and shrinking water reservoirs; a higher incidence of diseases spread by mosquitos and floods; more frequent flash floods, forest fires and landslides. By organizing festivals and forums like these, we can connect these local changes to larger global trends and discourse, and also introspect/discuss what we all collectively can do to conserve the same. We invite all residents and nature lovers of Bhutan to attend this festival.”

High Commission of Canada, In India, Canada is represented by the High Commission of Canada in New Delhi. Canada also has Consulates General in Bengaluru, Chandigarh and Mumbai; a Consulate in Kolkata; and Trade Offices in Ahmedabad, Chennai, Hyderabad and Kolkata. While Canada has a Consulate in Nepal, the High Commission in India also represents Canadian interests in Nepal and Bhutan.

Website: https://www.international.gc.ca/country-pays/india-inde/new_delhi.aspx?lang=eng

Royal Thimphu College (RTC) is the country's first and only A+ accredited higher-education institution. The College was established in 2009 with the vision to become an institution of academic excellence that challenges students to achieve their full potential and to become independent, lifelong learners and well-rounded, responsible citizens. RTC currently offers 10 undergraduate degree programmes under the affiliation of the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) and Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences (KGUMSB). RTC also maintains global partnerships and has agreements with over 50 educational institutes around the world offering opportunities for students to participate in cultural and academic exchange programmes. Website: www.rtc.bt.

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 increasing space for environmental issues in mass media and evolving 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, policymakers, 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 travelling film festivals and environment forums 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.

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