

Sikkim Ranks High on Environmental Sustainability Index

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Mr. Pradeep Kumar, CF (WP) receiving the Award



Certificated Awarded to Sikkim

Sikkim's green initiatives have started to bear fruits and how. The State has bagged the second spot in the country's environmental sustainability index (ESI).

The best performing states in the 2008 ranking is Manipur, followed by Sikkim and Tripura with the lowest ranking states: Punjab, Gujarat, and Haryana based on study of parameters like population pressure, stress on environment systems, health vulnerability and environment governance.

The index has been prepared by the Center for Development Finance (CDF) of the institute for Financial Management and Research (IFMR) based on the environmental performance of states in the country. The ESI shows that the state is at 2nd place in a list that ranks the ability of 28 states to protect their environmental in the coming years.

At the launch function held in Chennai yesterday, CDF release the report for 28 states in the country. The awards for Sikkim and Manipur mean that the North Eastern States have been able to sustain population pressure and environmental stress. During the launch function, Sikkim's environment and forest department representative Pradeep Kumar highlighted how the government's laws like those relating to the ban on plastics, use of chemicals in farming and environment cess, had helped in conservation and bring in more money for forestry.

Chattisgarh member secretary of environment P V Narasigham Rao said the state was setting an example by finely balancing between industrialization and ecology by strict monitoring. Meghalaya forest commissioner C D Khyinjing said the centre should create "green fund" for north-eastern states for increasing forest cover.

Award for green states was given to five selected states, who had performed well on various aspects of environmental sustainability, viz., Himachal Pradesh (government's initiative), Manipur (people's initiative) Chattisgarh (least polluted water), Sikkim (conservation of natural resources) and Maghalaya (air quality).

"ESI is an attempt to create a baseline of state's relative position in a sustainable trajectory. It has a strong policy focus and is designed to advocate analytical and empirical foundation for environmental policy making," said Jessica Wallack, director, CDF.

Studying 44 variables clustered into 15 indicators under five policy components to arrive at the ESI, the study reveals that none of the state is on a sustainable trajectory. At the same time, none of the states have performed very poor in all dimensions. Most states have done well in some area and need to improve a lot in many others issues, the report says.