



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
FORUM UTTARANCHAL

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25

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From the Desk of the Chairman, SDFU



It gives me great pleasure to present the Annual Report of the Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand (SDFU) for the year 2024–25.

This year has been both dynamic and impactful, marked by strong collaborative efforts and a growing momentum around youth engagement, sustainable development, and environmental stewardship in Uttarakhand.

In **June 2024**, we convened the **“Youth Network & Sensitisation Workshop: Creating Highways for Sustainable Entrepreneurship”**, a meaningful step in empowering our young minds. The workshop brought together passionate youth leaders, entrepreneurs, and practitioners to explore pathways that align economic opportunity with environmental responsibility. It reinforced our belief that youth are not just beneficiaries of development but its driving force.

Our flagship event, the **7th RST Forum**, held in **December 2024**, was themed **“Networking for Sustainable Development and Youth Empowerment in Uttarakhand.”** The forum served as a vibrant platform for dialogue and partnership, drawing diverse stakeholders from civil society, academia, government, and the private sector. The exchange of ideas underscored the urgent need to build networks that support inclusive, locally relevant, and sustainable solutions—particularly in our fragile mountain ecosystems.

A significant policy-level intervention was made through our collaboration with the **Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI)** for the **“Macro Level Stocktake Assessment on Solid Waste Management and Promoting a Circular Economy in the State of Uttarakhand”**. This workshop served as a macro-level stocktake assessment, examining current challenges and opportunities in waste management across Uttarakhand focusing on Srinagar (Gharwal region) & Bhowali (Kumaon region). The discussions helped identify systemic gaps and highlighted the need for mountain-sensitive policies and scalable circular economy models.

This year also saw a significant **expansion of our membership base**. We were honored to induct **new members from across sectors**, including **retired government senior’s officials, senior scientists, researchers, academician and corporate leaders**. Their diverse expertise

and leadership will further enrich SDFU's vision and operational strength as we navigate increasingly complex sustainability challenges in the mountain context.

As we look ahead, SDFU remains committed to advancing Uttarakhand's development in a manner that respects ecological integrity, promotes social equity, and amplifies the voices of youth and communities.

I would like to extend my sincere congratulations and heartfelt appreciation to all members of the SDFU, as well as to everyone who has stood with us over the last year in our pursuit of realizing our aspirations for a greener and more prosperous Uttarakhand.

We look forward for more fruitful and eventful years ahead.

SHRI STS LEPCHA

Chairman, SDFU

& Retd PCCF, Govt. of Uttarakhand

PREFACE

Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand is a civil society-led network platform with the mission to mainstream the concerns of Uttarakhand and its people in the development dialogue of the state. It functions as a platform to integrate the knowledge and experiences of multiple stakeholders working across Uttarakhand and uses this to inform and influence policy at the state level. SDFU's mission is to integrate the knowledge and experience of multiple stakeholders working on diverse issues across Uttarakhand Mountain independently, this is then used to inform and influence policy, at the state level.

SDFU aims to create a platform where these stakeholders integrate the collective knowledge and experience through an informed dialogue on identified themes for catalyzing action for sustainable development. Translating the dialogues further, our objective is to generate action on such themes through informed, relevant policies and action on the ground. SDFU is a decentralized and voluntary initiative of individual members and institutions and is affiliated with the Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI) as the state chapter organization for Uttarakhand, which is a civil society network formed in 2011 with the objective of providing stakeholders from the states of the Indian Himalayas region, a platform to discuss issues related to mountain development.

Youth Network & Sensitisation Workshop: Creating Highways for Sustainable Entrepreneurship

The workshop entitled “Youth Network & Sensitisation Workshop: Creating Highways for Sustainable Entrepreneurship” was organized at Doon University, Dehradun on June 21st-22nd, 2024. A total of 70 participants attended the workshop representing 30 young individuals from the districts of the Uttarakhand state representing various sectors of sustainable entrepreneurship including home stays, apiary, media, cinematography, Agripreneurship etc., and speakers from the university, government officials, researchers, scientific, NGOs, banking and community-based organizations. The workshop was sponsored by The Nainital Bank.



Day 1: Objectives of Workshop

Main objectives of the workshop were as follows:

- (i) Establish a network of young entrepreneurs and provide them mentorship opportunities

- (ii) Sensitize the young entrepreneurs to current trends in start-ups and self-employment opportunities
- (iii) Discuss the local issues and challenges faced by the youth of Uttarakhand
- (iv) Charter the future course of action and possible ventures in various sectors.

Inaugural Session

- (i) Definition of enterprise and start up
- (ii) Outmigration should not be viewed in negative sense. It is a natural process
- (iii) Today's youth is far more informed and resourceful than the youth of the past
- (iv) Youth of Uttarakhand need better networking, stronger team work and to be provided more mentorship opportunities



Technical Session 1: Ventures for Livelihoods

- Success stories in enterprise development
- Government schemes in livelihood development / livelihoods
- Gandhian model of development
- Don't compromise with your ethics and principles
- Love your natural surrounds & culture
- Involve local communities in homestay eco-tourism



Technical Session 2: Prospects for youth entrepreneurship and innovation in Uttarakhand

- Innovations and entrepreneurship needed in all professions
- Local goodwill and network model (Gharat / Panchakki ka atta)
- Design process – multiple hats and hard work
- 90% time for test and improvement - 10% time for production of final product - branding
- Entrepreneurship is matching your interest with resources around you.
- Costing and pricing
- Story sells



Technical Session 3: Success Stories

- Plenty of natural resources in Uttarakhand but neither managed nor utilized sustainably
- Chir Pine is like a Kalpvriksh for Uttarakhand
- Honey bees for ecological and economic security in rural areas
- Importance of self help groups → Federation of Farmers → Farmers Producer Groups
- High Density Orchards



Day 2:

Group Workshop: Project Formulation and Strategy

In this session, the participants were asked to form 3 mixed groups and brainstorm about any innovative project which could be taken up as new enterprise in the state. Each group was then asked to discuss the ideas and present the concept.

Group - 1:

Event Management Proposal: BYO BARAAT

Topic: Event Management

Name: BYO BARAAT

Location: Kumaon Region

Participants: Hushveen Kaur, Sumbul Naaz, Shahnaaz Ahmed, Anjali, Rajat, Amit, Sharda, and Sonam



An event management group was formed with a primary focus on organizing "marriages in villages". The inaugural event was planned for the Kumaon region, aiming to support marginalized artists. Operating on a commission-based model, the business objective was to build a comprehensive database of local artists through these events.

The business plan was structured into three phases:

- **Phase 1:** Targeting one district
- **Phase 2:** Developing a mobile app for scalability
- **Phase 3:** Scaling operations across the entire Kumaon state

Key assets required included traditional wedding paraphernalia like horse-drawn carriages, musicians, and bands. For the first year, an initial investment of 8-10 lakhs was earmarked to ensure smooth operations.

Revenue Sharing Model:

- 10% commission on lead generation
- 30% commission from company profits
- 60% share for the artists involved

The commitment was to empower local artists from any village in the Kumaon region, offering them significant job opportunities and enhancing their livelihoods with a generous 60% share of the business proceeds. This initiative not only provided them with event management experience but also prepared them for organizing various events beyond weddings.

As the business grew profitable and expanded its reach, diversification into organizing birthday parties, kitty parties, and other celebratory events was envisioned. Additional benefits included skill development for artists, uplifting marginalized groups, and creating positive societal impacts.

This holistic approach aimed not only at business success but also at fostering community development and cultural enrichment across the Kumaon region.

Group – 2 :

Topic: Agro-based commodities (Apple-related products)

Name of Brand: Sebwala

Location: Uttarakhand

Participants: Mr. Tushar Badola, Ms. Pooja Tamta, and Mr. Vijay Dhyani



In Group - 2, participants were tasked with developing a business model centered around agro-based commodities. Tushar Badola, Pooja Tamta, and Vijay Dhani formed a team focusing on Apple-related products, specifically planning to produce Apple squash under the brand name "Sebwala".

Initially, the team aimed to procure 50 quintals of apples from 50 farmers across 5 villages, amounting to an estimated cost of Rs. 2,00,000. Additionally, they planned to set up a processing unit with essential assets such as a pulper and mixer, costing Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 50,000, respectively.

The detailed breakdown of expenses for setting up the processing unit included:

- Bottles: Rs. 3,600
- Labor: Rs. 18,000
- Electricity: Rs. 5,000
- Packaging and Labeling: Rs. 45,000
- Other Miscellaneous Costs: Rs. 11,200
- Processing House: Rs. 50,000

These expenditures totaled approximately Rs. 2,02,800, subsidized to Rs. 1,83,200.

For marketing and sales, the team planned to sell each bottle of Apple squash at Rs. 100, targeting sales of 3,000 bottles per month, generating a monthly revenue of Rs. 3,00,000 and an annual revenue of Rs. 36 lakh. Operational costs included shop rent (Rs. 3,000), fixed assets installation (Rs. 50,000), and a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) cost (Rs. 10,000), amounting to an annual cost of Rs. 27,37,400 against revenues of Rs. 36,00,000, resulting in an annual profit of Rs. 8,62,000.

Looking ahead, the team's future plans included expanding their business by involving 100 farmers across 50 villages, and diversifying their product line to include Apple juice, jelly, jam, and other derivatives, capitalizing on the success of their initial model.

Group - 3

Topic: Homestay Ecotourism

Name Homestay: Himalayan view

Location: Almora Mathana

Participants: Mr Nawal Deep Bania, Saurabh Joshi, Vikram Singh Negi, Suruti Thapa and Shalini Thapa.



Himalayan View

Assets: Land, (renovated house), old Pahadi House

Material: Cement bricks, land , stones ,old doors, old window, toilet material etc .

Budget: 2 House renovation:15 lakh

Renovation: 8 lakh

Waste Management and Art Installation: working model, seasonal,4 staff, (local villagers),normal package, traditional.

Future Plan with Explanation: Participants were tasked with establishing a homestay named "Himalayan View." The homestay, set in an old pahadi house, utilized assets like land for renovation. An emphasis was placed on offering an authentic experience with nature walks led by local experts and engaging in various activities. Organic products such as dal, masala, and soap were used, ensuring affordability. Buransh juice was provided as a refreshing drink, and revitalizing ghost villages for profitability was prioritized through cost-effective operations.

The homestay, "Himalayan View," focused on cleanliness and sanitation, ensuring pristine washrooms, bedrooms, kitchens, and bathrooms. Natural resources were maximized; for instance, broken trees were repurposed into furniture like benches, chairs, and dining tables. Recycling was integral, utilizing plastic bottles for decorative purposes like creating attractive butterflies and cartoons, which appealed to guests. Waste management was diligently managed, with informative boards promoting environmental conservation, urging actions such as tree preservation, water conservation, prayers for the environment, and electricity conservation.

In seasonal operations, four local villagers were employed, supporting the community and enhancing local employment opportunities. The homestay offered both standard and traditional packages to cater to diverse guest preferences. The focus remained on continuous improvement, sustainable practices, and the development of the business. Dedication and hard work aimed at achieving the goal of expanding and enhancing the homestay business in the Himalayas.

Policy Recommendations

Based on the discussion, the following policy recommendations are made collectively by the group:

1. Establish a State-Recognized Youth Entrepreneurship Council

- Form a standing council comprised of youth entrepreneurs, mentors, policy advisors, and sector experts.
- Serve as a permanent advisory and action body to co-create entrepreneurship policies and programs.

2. Integrate Entrepreneurship & Sustainability Education in Skill Development Programs

- Embed modules on sustainable business practices, environmental impact, and climate resilience in existing vocational and skilling initiatives.
- Promote awareness of regional trends and innovations.

3. Institutionalize Annual Youth Entrepreneurship Forums

- Organize state-level forums and district-level workshops annually.
- Facilitate peer learning, business pitch sessions, and sectoral solution brainstorming.

4. Create a Public-Private Mentorship & Funding Network

- Incentivize experienced entrepreneurs and retired professionals to mentor youth.
- Launch micro-grants and early-stage funding options with a simplified application process for rural youth.

5. Enable Youth Representation in Local Policy Planning Committees

- Mandate the inclusion of trained youth representatives in District Planning Committees (DPCs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) to ensure grassroots challenges and innovations are reflected in development plans.

6. Launch a Digital Platform for Youth Collaboration & Resource Access

- Build an accessible, multilingual platform to host resources, trends, training content, and networking tools.

Photographs of the Event







7th R.S Tolia Forum 2024



Late Dr. Raghunandan Singh Tolia, was a visionary son of mountains, scholar and beacon of action. 11th December also happened to be the International Mountain Day. It is noteworthy that one of the major contributions made by Dr. R.S. Tolia in newly established state of Uttarakhand was administrative reforms in forestry working and convergence between forest and rural development.

A one-day workshop was organized on **11th December 2024** under the aegis of the **RST Forum**, an annual program held in tribute to **Late Dr. R.S. Tolia**. The event, themed "**Networking for Sustainable Development and Youth Empowerment in Uttarakhand**," took place at the IRDT Auditorium in support with The Nainital Bank, Himmotthan Society, Doon Library & Research Centre, and the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA).

The workshop was attended by over 80 participants, including senior councilors, scholars, government officials, entrepreneurs, researchers, community representatives, and members of civil society organizations actively working across Uttarakhand.

The Chief Guest for the Inaugural Session was Sri Rajshekhar Joshi, Vice Chairman of the State Institute for Empowering & Transforming Uttarakhand (SIETU). Mr. Ramesh Negi (Retd. IAS), President, Integrated Mountain Initiative graced the occasion as Guest of Honour. The RST Lecture 2024, titled "*Promoting Green Economy Through Unique Biodiversity of Uttarakhand: In Search of Potential for Impact Investment*," was delivered by Ms. Jyotsna Sitling (Former PCCF, Van Panchayat & Retd. IFS).

Key highlights of the workshop included discussions on opportunities and the state's preparedness to initiate impactful projects that align with youth aspirations and have strong potential to attract impact investment, thereby fostering a bottom-up green economy in Uttarakhand.

In his address, Sri Rajshekhar Joshi emphasized the role of SIETU as a premier policy think tank of the Government of Uttarakhand, offering strategic policy inputs and vision. He elaborated on long-term policies, programs, and sustainable initiatives designed to shape the state's future development trajectory.

Outcome and Takeaways of the Workshop

1. **Youth as Catalysts for Green Innovation:** Youth were recognized as pivotal actors in advancing sustainable development, with the potential to blend traditional knowledge with modern innovations in sectors such as clean energy, agro-ecology, and forest restoration.
2. **Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for Scalable Impact:** The need for robust collaboration among government institutions, civil society organizations, academia, and the private sector was emphasized to foster local entrepreneurship and amplify sustainable development initiatives.
3. **Strategic Focus Areas for Green Investment:** The panel identified priority sectors for green financing, including decentralized natural resource management, nature-based solutions, skill development, and sustainable tourism, aimed at inclusive economic transformation in mountain regions.
4. **Alignment with Vision Uttarakhand 2030:** Discussions reinforced the urgency of aligning ongoing policy efforts with the state's long-term development roadmap. Timely implementation of green economy strategies is essential to position Uttarakhand as a frontrunner in impact-driven development.
5. **Institutional Commitment to Inclusive, Data-Driven Planning:** Institutions such as SETU Aayog and IMI pledged support for evidence-based, community-centric planning frameworks that prioritize the inclusion of marginalized populations—especially women and youth—in the Himalayan development narrative.
6. **Community-Led Models as Pillars of Sustainability:** Village homestays, Van Panchayats, and similar grassroots enterprises were acknowledged as foundational to achieving both livelihood security and ecological stewardship in rural and mountain ecosystems.

7. **Policy-Enabled Green Enterprises:** Recommendations stressed that green enterprises must be rooted in local contexts, supported through targeted fiscal and policy incentives, and governed by principles that prevent environmental degradation and social inequity.
8. **Environmental Regulation in Tourism Planning:** The integration of carrying capacity assessments, enforceable waste disposal penalties, and improved solid waste infrastructure was identified as critical to mitigating the adverse ecological impacts of tourism.
9. **Operationalizing the Carbon Market for Community Benefit:** Carbon credit initiatives were highlighted as promising tools for climate finance, contingent on the establishment of transparent benefit-sharing mechanisms that ensure direct financial flows to forest-dependent communities.
10. **Cross-Sectoral Policy Integration:** A consensus emerged on the need for interdepartmental convergence to break down policy silos and foster systemic solutions across tourism, agriculture, environment, water, and livelihoods.
11. **Sustainable Tourism as a Strategic Imperative:** Panelists advocated for a transition from high-volume tourism to sustainability-centered tourism models that preserve the cultural and ecological integrity of the Himalayas.
12. **Embedding Sustainability in Education and Governance:** The forum underscored the importance of incorporating sustainability, equity, and environmental literacy into education systems and institutional practices to cultivate long-term leadership in green transformation.



RST Lecture 2024 title: “Promoting Green Economy through unique Biodiversity of Uttarakhand: In search of potential for Impact Investment”

Ms Jyotsna Sitling (Member, Advisory Committee to SEBI on Social Stock Exchange, Indian Forest Service (Retd.), Former PCCF, Government of Uttarakhand)



Introduction

First of all, I thank SFDU for having invited me to deliver 7th RST Memorial Lecture on the occasion of World Mountain Day.

It is my great honour to deliver 7th RST Memorial Lecture on this day as a tribute to our great master. The inspirational leader and mentor to a generation of public servants, civil society and RTI activists. He is more relevant today in view of today’s quantum mountain challenges and as his followers, we may have to make tough choices sometimes, if we want to

continue the legacy of Dr. R S Tolia Sir in the interest of this mountain state.

I was very fortunate to get mentored by Late Dr. R.S Tolia Sir, an inspirational leader and a great human being, in the early stage of my public service career and learn a great deal from him. I first came in touch with Tolia Sir during one of his field visit in Doon Valley Watershed Management Project in 1996. With keen eyes on the ground, he perhaps had been closely seeing my works since then and during my first posting as Conservator of Forests in year 2002, when the state had just came into existence, Nanda Devi National Park was ridden with conservation conflict that was receiving international attention. Seeing my people centric works in Doon Valley, Sir perhaps thought that I could solve it. It was Tolia Sir’s tremendous faith in my capacity to solve the park – people conflict in the area, the history followed when these 20 years of intense conflict got resolved resulting in enlisting of Valley of Flowers National Park in the World Natural Heritage Site in 2005. One of the key criteria for IUCN’s field assessment of the site was minimum conflicts with the people



both around Nanda Devi and the Valley of Flowers national parks. When I had worked there for about 3 years there, Tolia Sir asked me in year 2004, if I could apply for the post of Director, Livelihoods Improvement Project for the Himalayas funded by IFAD. This project was meant for enhancing livelihood of the poorest in 959 villages of 17 most food insecure development blocks of Uttarakhand. There also, the sound foundation on systems building approach to livelihoods promotion paid off richly to Uttarakhand Govt. with third the tranche of consecutive funding from IFAD with accelerated support for pan Uttarakhand coverage till year 2029 This tells volumes on Tolia Sir's vision for Uttarakhand. Tolia Sir was the one who fielded me for Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Award 2004 and my NDBR team for Prime Minister's Award for excellence in public administration 2005. He again believed that these works had distinction to get the national recognitions.

My most fulfilling experience to work with him was developing the Mountaineering Guideline of Uttarakhand in 2004 to '05, the first environment friendly mountaineering guideline of its kind in any mountain state in India. I had the opportunity to revise the same after 16 years in 2021 to '22 while maintaining the same environmental fervor... And, finally working in his spirit as PCCF Van Panchayat from 2020 to '23 to rectify the revenue records of 11,217 Van Panchayats, the subject which Tolia Sir had passionately worked for, and handing over the complete land records to each and every Van Panchayats with the support from Revenue Department.

Tolia Sir's knack of sensing the pulse of public administration from the ground and his passion to reflect and write every experience on his interface with Samaj, Bazar and Sarkar could help bring all three pillars together to work in building solid foundation for the future of Uttarakhand. I am sure, the lives of every august audience here, have been touched by Tolia Sir in a very special way. **Today, in the World Mountain Day is the special day to**



reaffirm our commitment to the Legacy of Tolia Sir.

sustainable livelihoods through green economy in Uttarakhand. Because the Green economy

My lecture of today, in sequel to last year's Memorial Lecture given by Dr. B. K Joshi on 'Thinking like a Mountain: Development imperatives in Uttarakhand' will focus on 'Doing like a Mountain' to promote

is the only way to mountain solutions for sustainable future, the very theme of this year's World Mountain Day.

Uttarakhand is endowed with many life-sustaining natural resources such as glaciers, forests, rivers and minerals. Forest resources of Uttarakhand provide critical ecological services to the vast population of our country extending beyond the state boundary.

Such natural endowments give a great opportunity and additional responsibility to the state of Uttarakhand to follow the path of green economy in managing its resources while leveraging its unique biodiversity aligned with sustainable usage practices and promotion of these resources. Using Uttarakhand's unique biodiversity for societal projects at community level is one way to attend this.

In today's lecture I will discuss the opportunities and readiness of the state to create such societal projects that are aspirational for the youth and have the possibility to attract impact investment to usher bottom-up green economy.

Uttarakhand Vision 2030 document aligned to SDG goals brought out by Planning Department with Institute of Human development New Delhi in 2021 envisages the attainment of SDGs goals keeping focus on four thematic areas i.e. Sustainable Livelihoods, Human Development, Social Development and Environmental Sustainability. In this mountain state, Sustainable Livelihoods is intricately linked with Environmental Sustainability. We have already seen how frequent outbreak of forest fires and natural disasters are creating havoc to the lives of proximate communities of this state and how it is actually disrupting the pathway to creating a distinct brand value of Uttarakhand as green state that could help in promoting the green economy.

Coming to the agenda of sustainable livelihoods, Uttarakhand Vision 2030 document has identified horticulture/hill agriculture along with aromatic plants, medicinal Plants with link to AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy), biotechnology and tourism as **growth drivers**. The selection of these sectors has been backed by a detailed sub-sector analysis. Along with this, the sectors like Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Information Technology and Green Power with emphasis on Small Hydropower have been identified in this vision document as the **growth enablers**.

The sector-wise financial resources required against the possibility of resources available to fulfil its SDG goals on sustainable livelihoods has been calculated in the time horizon of 3 years (2020), 7 years (2024) and 15 years (2030) from the year 2017 onwards in this document. The sector-wise resources requirements to meet the SDG target of the state by 2030 are humongous. To cite few examples of related sectors such as ‘agriculture & allied sectors’ indicates an expected shortfall of fund by Rs.568 crores by year 2024 with possible escalation of this shortfall to Rs. 3,285 crores by year 2030. Similarly, the expected shortfall of Rs. 113 crores in rural development financing by 2024 is expected to escalate to Rs. 2,139 crores by year 2030. Given such financing gaps, it becomes imperative for the State Government to leverage the natural endowments for sustainable livelihoods through market mechanisms and private sector partnerships. But unless the growth drivers for green economy are paid attention to in very systematic manner through an ecosystem building approach of growth enablers, it will never be able to gather the required traction for social investments and green investments leading to green growth in the long run.

To bring home the above points, it would be good to look at the second migration survey report of Uttarakhand, which reveals that after 2018, the profile of contribution of nano and micro enterprises in 5,837 Gram Panchayats starts with the largest share from multipurpose shops (23.24%), milk production (18.7%), vegetable cultivation (17.2%), taxi service (11.91%), others (8.33%) hotels (4.32%) , fast food corner (3.91%) , poultry farm (2.4%), computer services (1.95%), home stay (1.58%) , hardware (1.53%), garments (1.51%), mobile store/repair (1.38%) , automobile (0.83%) , mushroom (0.72%) and ecotourism (0.36%). This shows how the conventional economy is emerging/ growing in Uttarakhand hinterland. A quick glance to these statistics shows that there is a major contribution of tourism sector. But one can also see that adoption of eco-tourism has remained minimal since 2018.

It is noteworthy that Uttarakhand has made considerable strides to align sector wise resource allocation based on Uttarakhand Vision 2030 document and closely monitor the same through dedicated planning and monitoring of the stakeholder Departments to this effect. But it is equally important to address the vast resource gap, where, analyzing the readiness of the state to attract impact investments on livelihoods linked with environmental sustainability in agriculture and allied sectors and in tourism sector becomes important. Apart from this, the other key emerging sector identified is green building, which do not feature in **Uttarakhand Vision 2030**’ but has a unique advantage to promote green economy in the state, have also

been considered. While considering these, my talk will equally focus on growth **enablers** needing support of the government regulation and facilitation for promoting green economy in Uttarakhand. These are the health of the commons, renewable energy, water conservation, water harnessing and harvesting, solid waste management and information technology which hold the key for ecosystem building to attract green investments.

The quality of collaboration of state, market, civil society and knowledge institutions matters much as prerequisite ecosystem elements that build traction for green economy. The critical role of financial institutions and investors to push such growth drivers and growth enablers in this biodiversity rich state cannot be overstated. The role of social enterprises to innovate and promote green products and services and the critical role of Government to let such social enterprises work with the Government to bring impact on green economy holds the key.

Who counts as the primary stakeholders in such societal projects? The households in this mountain state thrive on basket of livelihood options offered by the natural resources. A number of formal, informal and traditional community institutions that are operational in Uttarakhand have their immense stake in the local biodiversity. These are Panchyati Raj institutions, Van Panchayats, Biodiversity Management Committees, Mahila Mangal Dals, Yuvak Mangal Dals, Joint Forest Management Committees, Eco Development Committees and Self Help Groups (SHGs). Over the period of last 30 years, SHGs/ Business Federations/ Producer Companies/ Cooperatives have been actively participating with their agriculture /horticulture/ allied products/services in the market nurtured by the rich biodiversity of the state. Uttarakhand also has a good network of strong civil society organisations (CSOs) and social entrepreneurs (SE) have worked with the people as change makers to overcome the biodiversity related livelihood challenges.

1. The key **growth driving** sectors and the key activities under these sectors that have the possibility to attract the State centric impact investment in societal projects to promote green economy are as under:

1.1 Agriculture and allied sectors (horticulture, forestry and livestock)

Agriculture and allied sectors while engaging the highest proportion of the labour force in Uttarakhand, contributes the least to the GSDP. Uttarakhand has high diversity in crop races, cultivars and livestock supported by wide wild variants of the on-farm crops in the wild forest

area. Climatic conditions of mountain regions are favorable for diversification in existing traditional agriculture, floriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry. Medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) cultivation is an emerging sector to increase income of marginal farmers as a substitute to low yielding traditional crops. Apart from high demand of high value crops like off-season vegetables, spices, flowers, medicinal & aromatic plants and Mushrooms etc., the emerging demand for superfoods, nutraceuticals, health supplements and medical grade apparel could be a game changer for farmers of Uttarakhand. The activities which have the potential to attract investments are

- Logistic (packaging and transportation infrastructure) and marketing support in terms of expertise in agriculture, horticulture and livestock products of Uttarakhand having niche identity to achieve the scale with quality such as unique spices, fruits, vegetables, organics, GI products and others. Partnerships with retail chains, e-commerce and export markets wherever possible.
- Extend cultivation of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAP) in unused land and absentee land-hold. This will help reduce man-wildlife conflict. Build institutional support for Research & Development (R&D) on MAP. Establish high-tech nursery for MAP. Initiative taken by Uttarakhand Govt. from 2023 to develop six aroma valleys is a welcome initiative.
- Achieve scale in natural honey production from biodiverse sources (farm, off-farm & wild) – a prominent vector entity in biodiversity conservation.
- Focus on expansion of industrial hemp, oilseeds with high nutraceutical value such as Perilla (plant source of omega 3 fatty acid).
- Promote freshwater fish in different riverine ecosystems. e.g. trout farming with research in high quality fish seeds.
- Promote craft and food craft to mainstream traditional Agri and allied crops in hospitality sector(cuisine and gift) with unique branding.
- Develop blockchain technology to make organic certification more affordable to small farmers. Bring efficiency and effectiveness in crop insurance scheme by use of appropriate digital technology.
- Invest in technology to bring market closer for payment of ecological services – water and carbon sequestration.
- R&D with Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) support to bring the most useful healing practices of traditional healers to the market.

- Research and investment with the community for superfoods, nutraceuticals and supplements.
- Research and Investment in medical grade clothing made from industrial hemp and nettle and other natural fiber and promotion of sericulture (both Oak tassar & Mulberry based silk) based apparels.
- Research and investment in bamboo cultivation for green construction and furnishing.

Innovations to mitigate man animal conflict

1.2 Ecotourism and environmentally conscious tourism

The challenge of Uttarakhand is in handling mass religious tourism on one hand and niche tourism on the other hand. Nature based tourism or ecotourism focusing on societal good has great potential to leverage the local economy while contributing to the sustainable growth of the state. Given the massive potential of ecotourism, there is a need to diversify tourism activities (both on farm, off farm and wild) while mapping the same with different products and services under ecotourism that cater to local livelihood enhancing options. Ecotourism needs massive community involvement to maintain the authenticity of the property and the services that flows from it.

There is a need to develop & create clearly demarcated ecotourism circuits. The circuits will be based on physical and environmental characteristics like land use cover, scenic beauty, species diversity (abundance and density of unique and endemic species), protection of species and socio-economic factors like accessibility (distance from roads and possibility for human mobility), community's settlement size and willingness to participate. Infrastructure, connectivity, skill development and accreditation of the services would be a key to offer a distinct ecotourism experience on this count. Experiential attribute to a place can be the prime mover in creating a distinct brand under different sub-themes.

An integrated approach to planning these circuits, along with a comprehensive area development approach to ensure the availability all the requisite facilities (infrastructure for reach, connectivity and amenities) in these circuits, is essential (Ref: Uttarakhand vision 2030). For this, coordination between two key departments (Tourism and Forest) and with the other stakeholder departments holds the key for attracting investment. The development of mountaineering policy with all environmental safeguards integrated for regulated mountaineering in 2005 (revised on 2022) is one such example of inter-departmental coordination between Tourism and Forest Department. Apart from the above, the initiatives that can attract investments are:

- Skill development on eco-tourism activities such as wildlife tourism, birdwatching, heritage walk, trekking, nature trail walks for ‘nature bath’ and tea tourism etc.
- Market research and investment in fast-moving usable souvenirs (e.g. flasks and straw from bamboo vis-à-vis traditional bamboo baskets) from local bio-resources.
- Mentoring, handholding and investing in skilled youth for entrepreneurship in ecotourism value chain. Partnerships with Indian and foreign tour companies dedicated to ecotourism and getting their suggestions.
- Training youth of ecotourism destinations in Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy.
- Promotion of homestays and agri-tourism in ecotourism circuits with proper regulation for standard operating practices (SoPs).
- Waste management in eco-tourism both at community and individual level.

1.3 Green construction

Due to climate change and Covid like situations, people from the cities, especially the capital city of India, Delhi, would now like to reside in the small towns and nearby villages of Uttarakhand hills. This is a big opportunity to equip the state with policies and practices of green building as this brings a vast array of practices, techniques, and skills to reduce and ultimately eliminate the impact of construction on the environment and human health. This has the huge potential to create aspirational job for the youth.

This will emphasize renewable resources, e.g., using sunlight through passive solar, active solar and photovoltaic equipment, and using plants and trees through green roofs, rain gardens, and reduction of rainwater run-off. Keeping in view all these, green infrastructure planning and skilling of the local youth in green building would be important. This will give many sustainable green jobs. Use of latest technologies in planning and executing picturesque landscaping and reviving traditional architecture in homes with the efficient use of traditional material (wood and bamboo) will add a tremendous value to the esthetics of the state while creating local employment. Areas which need attention to attract investments are:

- Proactively plan and execute green building policies especially in prospective green township areas in the state.
- Provide best practices, techniques, and skills to local youth on green jobs

pertaining to green building.

- Promote local entrepreneurship (individual or collective) around various green building products and services.
- Link green building Initiative of Uttarakhand with other high-end investments such as Green MedCity and Health City, Green Film City, Eco-friendly Education City for HiTech Disciplines, etc.

2. The imperative of growth enablers:

Green economy cannot be attended in isolation. It needs **growth enablers** to create a positive ecosystem for impact investment. The key enablers as already mentioned earlier are:

2.1 Health of the commons and the community institutions

The quality of civic institutions managing natural resources and their ability to harness ecological services through common consensus (social capital) would go a long way to enable them participate effectively environment market, such as, Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) under Biodiversity Act and REDD+ market instruments. But this calls for the Government to have long term engagement with the public with accountability engrained for sustainable management natural resources through right based approach to involving local communities as the proximate custodians of these open common resource.

In this regard, it will be pertinent to bring the mention of 11217 Van Panchayats located in 11 hill districts of the state, which are involved in the management of 4527 square kilometer forest area. These forests are linked to the source of agriculture and forestry-based livelihood of more than 10 lakh rural families. Van Panchayats have the huge potential to get integrated with the carbon market and other ecological services market to provide sustained green credit directly to the local people. Such a sustained green income only can help mobilize the cooperation of locals in preventing encroachment, prevent forest fire in local Panchayati forests and as well as in nearby reserved and protected forests. But all is not well in the management of Van Panchayat due to years of dual control and management by Revenue and Forest Department supplemented by sub- optimal accountability of both the Departments for good governance of Van Panchayats. A comprehensive evaluation of the policy gaps in the management of Panchayati Forests had been done and suggestions have been made to the Govt. for governance reforms in Van Panchayats in the form of an overhauled Panchayati Van Niyamawali (2023) during my tenure as PCCF Van Panchayat (from 2020 to '23).

Similarly, sustainable management of non-timber forest produce (NTFP) from the Panchayati and Reserve Forests necessitates a well-managed system of extraction quotas complemented by ex-situ production pipeline of medicinal and aromatic plants through planting and re-planting, and reduction of wastage in the value links. In the absence of clearly articulated and properly managed common property resource regime with the forest fringe villagers, the forests as open resources are liable to get degraded soon. Uttarakhand is blessed to have Van Panchayat institutions, which can form a vital platform for self-regulation of stakeholder public provided one Department meant for such purposes work dedicatedly with the Van Panchayats. The present regulation on Van Panchayats is not amenable to such reforms and the regulation suggested to the Government to bring such reforms is yet to be taken up by the Government.

2.2 Renewable energy

Renewable energy plays key role in driving the economy in a decentralized manner that empowers the community by enabling them to lower their input cost in the production process. The share of renewable energy in the total energy demand of Uttarakhand has been planned for expansion, from the current 3.2 per cent to 15.1 per cent by 2030. This has mostly relied on expansion of mini-hydro and solar capacity additions. This needs an adequate in-depth study of solar irradiance, land availability, and water resources (Uttarakhand Vision 2030).

Initiatives that can attract investments are:

- Mapping of various forms of renewable energy usage points/clusters in targeting the youth for training with customized technologies for local use in various economic activities. Awareness building in public on economic and environmental benefits of renewable energy and energy conservation.
- Provide/Procure renewable energy equipment at community level such as Gram-Panchayat, SHG Business Federation, etc.
- The value chain integration of renewable energy in the branding exercise of Uttarakhand with green label would be an important step to take forward this sector.
- Invest in state of art technologies in renewable energy efficiency.

2.3 Water: Conservation, harnessing and harvesting

The water sources are under severe strain in the state with continuously declining per capita water availability, increased over-exploited areas, accelerated demand for water with Industry, change of consumption and distribution pattern with the growing economy, growing quality and equity concerns, etc. Climate change has affected very large temporal and spatial

variation in rainfall. This, along with change in land use pattern, has led to drying of many water points in the recent past at an alarming rate.

Water, besides being our survival necessity, is a lifeline for harnessing on-farm biodiversity for livelihood sustenance. Till date many central, state and externally aided projects have invested in water and watershed management programs of Uttarakhand since 1985 with varied results. Awareness in the community to conserve catchment area by freeing it from open grazing is the key to sustain perennial sources of water in the watershed area apart from the soil and water conservation through mechanical and bio treatment. The spring-shed and water-shed treatment method followed by the state is still gross which incurs a huge cost. There is an urgent need to bring down this cost with the use of state-of-the-art technologies to achieve a scale in spring-shed treatment. Equally important is to save water – most importantly in all tourism destinations. It would be equally important. The interventions that can attract investments are:

- Smarter way to augment and use water – use of latest technology for scientific analysis of springwater dynamics through spring-shed approach in hilly districts.
- Smarter way to save and re-use water through high tech methods.
- Rainwater Harvesting both for rural and urban households to maximize capture of run-off for surface storage as well under-ground recharge.
- Skilling to create water entrepreneurs/ service providers at local level for water survey and water augmentation (e.g. geo-hydrology graduates along with barefoot technicians), water conservation and usage systems (water entrepreneurs).
- Need to explore the role of the community in market-based models of water conservation including under ‘Payment for Ecological Services’. Also search out market models for skillful harnessing of water, safe water supply, judicious water usage, and other value additions in water management systems.

2.4 Recycling of solid and liquid waste

Tourism in Uttarakhand cannot be thought without its waste management imperatives. Uttarakhand has a sedentary population of 1.2 crores, tourist in Char Dham and Hemkund is 15 lakhs, tourist in Haridwar and Rishikesh in normal times 3 crores, tourist during Kumbh 10 crores, tourist destinations 1 crore, others 10 lakhs (Refer: Uttarakhand Urban Sector Investment Development Program). Per capita waste generated in Uttarakhand is 250 gms

/day. Out of which 20 gms /capita/day is plastic waste generated in tourist areas (Ref: Uttarakhand Urban Sector Investment Development Program). This also includes laminated polymers used in packing food material. Irresponsible disposal of waste in tourist areas is the source of man-wildlife conflict in the present.

The areas needing investment for improvement are:

- End use disposal facility for mixed plastics without incineration or burn technology.
- Facility to utilize laminated polymers through recycling into utilities.
- Infrastructure inputs like compactors for cheap transportation from high Hills.
- Technology to handle sanitary waste at community level.
- Investment for compliant sanitary landfills in the plains.
- Investment in mass education of children for managing solid and plastic waste.
- To promote public awareness about the need for maintaining cleanliness, public health.

2.5 Information Technology

Digital economy goes hand in hand in creating opportunities for Uttarakhand to sustainably leverage its rich natural and human resources towards green, decentralized and self-reliant economy. Information technology is increasingly becoming indispensable for the communities to interact with the market in a free, fair and transparent manner both as suppliers and at the demand side. Infrastructure such as access to broad-band, digital education and skillsets are important bottlenecks as of now in the state. Few Gram Panchayats in Uttarakhand still do not have access to internet network such as 3G and 4G mobile connectivity and other private connectivity. The network is mostly available uninterrupted only in major cities in the foothills and in the towns in the hills.

The interventions for which there is a need to attract investments are:

- Make the state of Uttarakhand a fully digitized and networked.
- Connecting or strengthening all village institutions such as Village panchayat, Cooperatives and Business Federations and other relevant organizations with internet facilities. At least the Common Service Centre needs to be well connected and fully equipped.
- Promote use of Information Technology (IT) in various sectors; in key growth sectors and enabling sectors as mentioned above.
- Capacity building & training of local youth in IT sector.

2.6 Institutional infrastructure and collaborative ecosystem

In addition to the above, the institutional infrastructure and collaborative ecosystem would play a major role to build traction for growth drivers. The collaborative partnership among five sets of institutions would be: Government, Corporate Sector and the market, Civil Society, Capital Market and Knowledge Institutions – all of these would be required for this. The government has the power to make policy to direct resource allocation in various sectors, spatial locations and for the benefit of certain segments of the population. The corporate sector, because of its fundamental concern with cost efficiency and return on investment, plays a role in the production, sale and distribution of goods and services, including providing necessary technical support. Civil society Organizations (CSOs) mobilize and organize the people, develop norms of working, and train the people on aspects of eco-restoration and livelihoods generation. The contribution of knowledge organizations, think tanks, universities and other research bodies are required to draw on concepts and incubate Uttarakhand specific innovations in climate resilience and green economy in relation to potential drivers and potential enablers.

2.7 Role of finance – philanthropy and Investments

If we analyze the possible source of investments in individual social enterprises and community based social enterprises dedicated to the green economy, neither the government nor the corporate sector is the largest player. Despite a large amount of self-financing done by collective enterprises or individual Start-ups and Scale-ups, vast amounts of financial resources would be required to adopt and scale up their initiatives. For this, one would need philanthropic capital like CSR fund and individual philanthropy or mainstream capital from banks and from private investors. The inflow of mainstream finance needs to be tempered with social and environmental concerns, which could be brought in their ESG balance sheets. Apart from the mainstream finance, Govt. of India has jumped many regulations over last 12 years to facilitate investments for social and environmental cause from private sources starting with Alternate Investment fund (AIF) regulation in 2012, Corporate Social Responsibility mandate in 2013, Social Venture Capital Fund brought under AIF in 2014, Blended Finance to support sunrise sectors in Climate-tech and Agri-innovations in 2021 and opening of Social Stock Exchange in 2022.

All funders interested in deploying capital for impact broadly fall within one of the three categories:

(1). **ESG & Sustainable Finance** (E.g. **NABARD's Green Climate Fund to finance**

sustainable agriculture)

(2). **Impact Investment** (*Social impact bond* - E.g. Educate Girls Bond) / (*Environmental impact bonds* - E.g. Green bonds in different forms promoted by RBI and the Govt. to encourage investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable agriculture and other projects that promote environmental sustainability) and

(3). **Blended Finance** (E.g. MUDRA has mixed Govt. schemes with private banks to serve affordable loan to low income people) / **Venture Philanthropy** (E.g. Funding for **Kinara Capital**, a financial service company providing loans to small businesses).

The financing spectrum of capital mainly contained in the above three investment segments operates with increasing levels of social and environmental impact and decreasing focus on financial returns. Each of these segments has a distinct set of funders with different risk-return-impact preferences and decision-making criteria for allocating capital. The green finance ecosystem that includes products like green bonds, loans, insurance, and funds, all intended to facilitate the shift toward a low-carbon, resource-efficient economy cuts across these three segments of financing.

In the above regard, it would be interesting to analyze the nature of capital raised by 162 recognized Start-ups listed in the Uttarakhand startup portal. This would give us insights if any of these Start-ups are working on a Social Enterprise mode for promoting the Green Economy in Uttarakhand. It would be equally important to know how debates/ discussions and the dissertations/researches are being organized across the Universities in and out of Uttarakhand for social/environmental innovations for promotion of green economy and for climate resilience of Uttarakhand, and how such researches are being channelized as a proof of concept for social enterprise startups to take off and scale-up.

2.8 Role of public servants:

To build traction for specific outcome for any societal projects, there is a need for a close cross sectoral collaboration by the state with the market, knowledge institutions and Civil Society Organisations. Here the Govt. has to play a major role as a regulator, as a facilitator and as a market participant. It would be important to analyze how green and biodiversity concerns are getting integrated in public funding by the state through concerned programs and schemes of related sectors that has either positive or unintended negative impact on the green economic development of Uttarakhand and take promotional and corrective measures accordingly.

The clarion call to Uttarakhand's public servant is for precisely spotting and skillfully handling the needful strategic alliances, collaborations, convergence and advocacy with the concerned stakeholders from market, knowledge institutions, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and others to mobilize resources and expertise to address diverse system building issues on the ground and at policy level with much needed impetus on expertise to create impact on green economy with depth and scale.

Given the scope of green economy in the state, in the present-day context, the traditional regulatory role of Forest Department as the manager of a territorial entity based on technical knowledge of forestry, wildlife and environment, although important, has limited opportunities to take care of ever depleting natural resources and serve the livelihood interest of the people. Same holds true with the other stakeholder departments dealing with land, water, energy and waste disposal where people centric approach to promoting green economy can only build traction for social and environmental impact investments for societal level projects.

3. I would like to conclude with these points:

i. Policy framework advocated by the Government in **Vision Uttarakhand 2030** document make it a good case for making Uttarakhand investment friendly for impact investors. Time is here now act on this.



ii. Role of civil society organizations and community organizations are crucial in mobilizing social capital to create green economy at a scale by mitigating the business risk. This will help organize a better collective bargaining power for green financing.

iii. It is the health of the commons maintained by public disciplining through rewards and deterrence and a strong sensemaking of this in the public policy and Govt. practices is going to uphold the brand value of Uttarakhand to attract green funds.

iv. If the commons are protected, a number of bio-resource based enterprise can thrive and prosper in Uttarakhand. This has the huge potential to create decentralized jobs which Uttarakhand is needing today. This has huge potential to rehabilitate COVID returnees.

v. The role of the Government would be crucial to enable interdisciplinary, interdepartmental and collaborative economic decision-making involving State, Market

and Civil Society stakeholders to develop traction for investment from banks and financial institutions. There is vast scope for improvement for such convergence within and outside the government for infrastructure, skilling and entrepreneurship to revive the local green economy.

vi. There are a number of externally aided projects in Uttarakhand dedicated to livelihoods promotion. Some of the livelihoods promotion fund can be augmented to invite impact investment (as Social Venture Fund) in needful areas to leverage much needed capital, expertise and talent from the market (from impact investors and social entrepreneurs) to take the present community initiative to a greater height in terms of reach, depth and inclusion in promoting the green economy.

vii. There is a need to map the supportive programs and policy instruments of State and Central Government including the externally aided projects that can give a conducive environment to hedge some of the critical risk for inviting impact funding.

viii. Departments exercising regulations on land, forests, water, environment, energy and urban development need to review their organizational functions and organizational culture to work closely with public proximate to the resources to attract green investment for Uttarakhand.

Reference: Uttarakhand Vision 2030 published by Institute of Human Development, New Delhi for Planning Department, Government of Uttarakhand, published on 07.12.2021

https://20pt.uk.gov.in/department7/library_file/file-28-05-2022-06-59-2

Photographs of the Workshop





State Consultation Workshop on “Macro level stocktake assessment on solid waste management and promoting a circular economy in the State of Uttarakhand”

A rapid study “Macro level stocktake assessment on solid waste management and promoting a circular economy in Uttarakhand” was undertaken by Integrated Mountain Initiative, Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand and Waste Warriors in September to December 2024 in Srinagar (Garhwal Division) and Bhowali (Kumaon Division) to develop a macro level understanding on solid waste management systems in emerging hill towns and cities of Uttarakhand, India and analyse potential opportunities and gaps at each node of its value chain to help promote circular economy.



The state consultation workshop titled “Macro Level Stocktake Assessment on Solid Waste Management and Promoting a Circular Economy in the State of Uttarakhand” was held on December 12 th , 2024, at the Swami Nityanand Auditorium Building, Doon University, Dehradun. Jointly

organized by the Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI), ICIMOD, Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand (SDFU), and the Doon University, the workshop aimed to assess the current state of solid waste management (SWM) in Uttarakhand and explore strategies to integrate circular economy principles into waste management practices. Discussions during the event included policy frameworks, technological advancements, community engagement, and sustainable business models.

The participation of experts, NGOs, policymakers, and local stakeholders made it a comprehensive platform to brainstorm solutions for the region's growing waste crisis, particularly the issue of plastic waste.



The objectives of the workshop were multifaceted. It aimed to assess existing policies on solid waste management and evaluate their potential for promoting a circular economy. A macro-level stocktake assessment was conducted to develop a comprehensive understanding of solid waste management across all nodes of the value chain. The workshop sought to review and identify proven and scalable solutions for solid waste management while mapping out relevant stakeholders involved at each node of the value chain. Furthermore, it focused on recommending viable strategies and approaches tailored to address the unique challenges of emerging hill towns and cities in Uttarakhand, India.

The state consultation workshop concluded with several key outcomes and recommendations. First, participants stressed the need for robust policy frameworks to support segregation, recycling, and compliance while promoting incentives for circular economy business models. Second, integrating scalable recycling technologies and innovative waste management practices was identified as a priority. Third, strengthening IEC (Information, Education, and Communication) campaigns was recommended

to improve public participation and awareness. Finally, capacity building through skill training for waste management professionals was emphasized as a critical component for sustainability.

The workshop successfully facilitated a multi-stakeholder dialogue, fostering actionable insights to address Uttarakhand's solid waste management challenges. By fostering collaboration among policymakers, NGOs, industry leaders, and communities, the event laid the foundation for sustainable waste management practices and circular economy integration in the state. This initiative serves as a vital step towards addressing the growing waste crisis in the region while promoting environmental sustainability and economic development.

Annual General Meeting

7th Annual General Meeting of Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand (SDFU) held on 16th September 2024 in Zoom Meeting (Virtual Mode), chaired by Shri STS Lepcha, Chairman SDFU with 7 councilors and members in attendance. After the Chairman welcome address, Ms Binita Shah, Secretary presented the previous minutes of the meeting of the 6th AGM, followed by a brief discussion on SDFU admin related, creation of SDFU Youth Forum Network and action plan for year 2024-25.

Key Discussion points:

- Update on the status and progress of the renewal process for the SDFU society certificate.
- Upcoming workshop for year 2024-25
- Discussion on SDFU Youth Forum Network
- Collaboration of workshop with Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI)
- Discussion on 7th RST Forum 2024
- Formation of an **advisory committee** for senior councilors

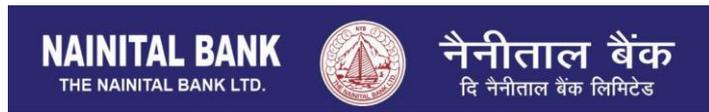


(Screenshot of the 7th Annual General Meeting)

List of SDFU Councilors / Members

S.no	Name	Designation
1	Shri STS Lepcha	Chairman
2	Dr Gopal Singh Rawat	Vice- Chairman
3	Ms Binita Shah	Secretary
4	Ms Richa Ghansiyal	Treasurer
5	Dr Rajendra P Dobhal	Councilor
6	Ms Vibha Puri Das	Councilor
7	Shri N S Napalchiyal	Councilor
8	Dr.B S Barfal	Councilor
9	Dr B K Joshi	Councilor
10	Shri N Ravi Shanker	Councilor
11	Shri Krishna S. Rautela	Member
12	Shri Anoop Nautiyal	Member
13	Ms Priyanka Tolia	Member
14	Dr. Pankaj Naithai	Member
15	Dr. Rajendra Bisht	Member
16	Dr. Vinod K Bhatt	Member
17	Ms. Jyoti Chamoli	Member
18	Dr. Avinash Chandra Joshi	Member
19	Shri IK Pandey	Member
20	Shri CS Joshi	Member

Our Partners and Supporters



Auditor's Report & Balance Sheet



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ADROIT & CO

Chartered Accountants
(Formerly known as Tarun Nand & Company)

Offices at New Delhi, Ranchi, Chandigarh, Ghaziabad, Noida, Faridabad & Gurugram

Auditor's Report

1 We have audited the financial statements of **Sustainable Development Forum Uttaranchal (SDFU)**, 5/6, New 25, Lane No.3, Teg Bahadur Road, Dehradun (PAN No.: AAQAS8674M), which comprises the Balance Sheet as at **31st March 2025**, the statement of Income & Expenditure A/c for the year then ended, and a Notes to the Accounts and other information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

2 Management is responsible for the preparation of these financial statements that give a true and fair view of the financial position and financial performance in accordance with the Accounting Standard generally accept in India. This responsibility includes the design, implementation and maintenance of adequate internal financial controls, that were operating effectively for ensuring the accuracy and Completeness of the accounting records, relevant to the preparation & presentation of financial Statements that give a true & fair view and are free from materials misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

3 Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with the Standards on Auditing issued by Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI). Those Standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and the disclosures in the financial statements. The procedure selected depends on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessment, the auditor considers internal financial control relevant to the preparation of the financial statements that give a *true & fair view* in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances.

An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management as well as evaluating the overall presentation of financial statements.

Opinion

4 Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

In our opinion and information & explanations given to us, the aforesaid financial statements give the information in the manner so required and give a true and fair view in conformity with the accounting principles of the state of affairs as and its surplus for the year ended on that date.

We report, subject to Notes to accounts and our Audit observations to this report of even date that :

- A We have obtained all the information and explanations which, to the best of our knowledge and belief, were necessary for the purpose of the audit.
- B In our opinion, proper books of account have been kept at the office, so far as appears from our examination of the books.
- C In our opinion and to the best of our information and according to the explanations given to us, the said accounts, read with notes thereon, if any, give a true and fair view :-
 - (i) In the case of the Balance Sheet, of the state of the affairs as **31st March, 2025**, and
 - (ii) In the case of Income & Expenditure A/c for the year ended on that date.
 - (iii) In the case of Receipts & Payments A/c for the year ended on that date.

Dated : 24-07-2025

For ADROIT & CO
Chartered Accountants



(CA. Tarun Agarwal)
Partner

FRN No. : 086547N / M No. : 093945
UDIN No. : 25093945BMLJXR1522

Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand (SDFU)
5/6, New 25, Lane No.3, Teg Bahadur Road, Dehradun

Balance Sheet

As at 31st March 2025

PARTICULARS	Note No.	As at 31st March 2025	As at 31st March 2024
		(in Rs.)	(in Rs.)
Liabilities:			
Capital Account			
Corpus Capital Fund	1	260,040.45	668,258.43
Earmarked Grant Fund	2	-	-
General Surplus Fund	3	-	-
Current Liabilities			
Sundry Creditors & Payables	4	-	-
TOTAL	>>>	260,040.45	668,258.43
Assets			
Fixed Assets			
As per details	5	19,740.84	28,772.75
Current Assets			
Cash & Cash Equivalents	6	240,299.61	639,485.68
TOTAL	>>>	260,040.45	668,258.43

Significant accounting policies and notes to accounts

On behalf of the Board Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand (SDFU)


Chairman



Secretary
Dated  24-07-2025

For ADROIT & CO
Chartered Accountants





(CA.Tarun Agarwal)
Partner
FRN No.: 006547N / M.No.: 093945
UDIN No.: 25093945BMLJKR1522

Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand (SDFU)

5/6, New 25, Lane No.3, Teg Bahadur Road, Dehradun

Schedules to the Balance Sheet

Note	Name of the Balance Sheet items	Year 2024-2025			
		As at 31st March 2024	Transactions during the year (Debit/Credit)		As at 31st March 2025
1	Corpus Capital Fund				
1	Corpus Fund	668,258.43			668,258.43
2	Transferred from Income & Expenditure A/c	-	-	408,217.97	(408,217.97)
	Total	668,258.43	-	408,217.97	260,040.45
2	Earmarked Grant Fund				
1	Grant Name	-			-
2	Others				-
	Total	-	-	-	-
3	General Surplus Fund				
1	Surplus from Income & Expenditure A/c	-	-		-
2	Others				-
	Total	-	-	-	-
4	Current Liabilities				
1	Sundry Creditors	-	-	-	-
2	Other Payables	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-
5	Fixed Assets	As at 31-03-2024	Addition	Depreciation	As at 31-03-2025
1	Laptop	5,616.00		2,246.00	3,370.00
2	Printer	5,502.56		825.56	4,677.00
3	Computer & Others	13,248.00		5,299.00	7,949.00
4	Office Electric Kettle	1,300.50		195.50	1,105.00
5	Office Room Heater	3,105.69		465.84	2,639.84
	Total	28,772.75	-	9,031.90	19,740.84
6	Cash & Cash Equivalents	As at 31-03-2024	Debits	Credits	As at 31-03-2025
1	UBI Bank No. 60260201005552	639,485.68	725,491.00	1,124,677.07	240,299.61
2	Cash In Hand	-			-
	Total	639,485.68	725,491.00	1,124,677.07	240,299.61





Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand (SDFU)

5/6, New 25, Lane No.3, Teg Bahadur Road, Dehradun

Income & Expenditure Account

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31ST MARCH, 2025

PARTICULARS		Note No.	As at 31st March 2025	As at 31st March 2024
A	Fund Receiveds :			
1	Grants		700,000.00	575,000.00
2	Other Receipts		12,000.00	23,010.00
3	Bank Interest		13,491.00	38,770.00
Total (A)			>>> 725,491.00	636,780.00
B	Fund Payments :			
a	RST Forum Expenses:			
1	RST Forum /Secretariat Expenses		-	19,321.00
2	Conference & Accomodation Expenses		73,522.00	78,116.00
3	Travelling & Local Conveyance		86,472.10	7,085.50
4	Printing & Stationery Expenses		83,736.00	50,897.00
5	Misc. & Office Expenses		652.75	7,242.00
b	Workshop Expenses:			
1	Consultancy/Honorarium Expenses		-	23,750.00
2	Conference & Meeting Expenses		99,293.50	105,250.00
3	Travelling & Local Conveyance		98,088.72	43,125.28
4	Printing & Stationery Expenses		134,687.55	41,357.00
5	Misc. & Office Expenses		21,763.18	
c	Administrative Expenses:			
1	Consultancy Fees / Salary		284,607.68	120,000.00
2	Audit fees		-	29,500.00
3	Bank Charges		423.62	251.94
4	Office Rent		25,000.00	30,000.00
5	Courier Expenses		981.00	1,030.00
6	Utility Expenses		40,043.00	74,909.03
7	Misc. Expenses		3,210.00	63,492.73
8	Travelling & Local Conveyance		11,285.39	39,047.00
9	Website & Software Expense		27,882.68	31,657.00
10	Printing & Stationery		43,199.50	106,899.00
11	Meeting / AGM Expenses		39,828.40	54,319.22
12	Grant Given		50,000.00	125,000.00
13	Depreciation		9,031.90	22,668.65
Total (B)			1,133,708.97	1,074,918.35
>>	Excess of Expenditure over Income = (A - B)		(408,217.97)	(438,138.35)

On behalf of the Board Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand (SDFU)

For **ADROIT & CO**
Chartered Accountants


Chairman



Secretary


Date: 24-07-2025





(CA. Tarun Agarwal)
Partner

FRN No.: 006547N / M No.: 093945
UDIN No.: 25093945BMLJXR1522



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ADROIT & CO
Chartered Accountants
(Formerly known as Tarun Nand & Company)

Offices at New Delhi, Ranchi, Chandigarh, Ghaziabad, Noida, Faridabad & Gurugram

Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand (SDFU)
5/6, New 25, Lane No.3, Teg Bahadur Road, Dehradun

Notes of Accounts and Significant Accounting Policies
As at 31st March 2025

- 1 a The Method of Accounting generally followed is Cash-basis and therefore, Income and expenditure is recognized on receipt basis.
- b The financial statements are based on historical cost convention
- 2 a Revenue is recognized only after it become due.
- b In case of Grant/Budget allocation received from the Government or other agencies the unutilized portion thereof have been treated in the Balance Sheet as liability under the head, "Grant Funds."
- c Expense on the other hand is recognized once the payment for the same have been made.
- 3 Fixed Assets are stated at cost of acquisition or construction less depreciation charged to profit and loss account. Cost is inclusive of duties, taxes, erection/commissioning and incidental expenses.
- 4 a Depreciation on Fixed Assets is charged on written down value method.
- b The depreciation on fixed assets put to use at any time during the year is provided at rates as specified under the Income Tax Act, 1961
- 5 a Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand (SDFU) is a group of well-known scholars, former administrators and subject experts who have come together with a view to create a collaborative initiative involving a number of constituents from grassroots to research and policy making committed to and working towards the common vision and mission of sustainable development of the mountains in general and Uttarakhand in particular. The Society acted as a generating ideas for formulating and Implementing policies and programmes of sustainable development encompassing environmental, social and economic domains in mountain areas, especially Uttarakhand.
- b Funds released to Institutions, NGO's & other Agencies under various schemes shown as expenditure in Income & Expenditure Account are subject to utilization certificates.
- c Grant utilized during three year are transferred to Income & Expenditure Account & unutilized portion is shown as grant Fund under liability side of Balance Sheet.

Dated : 24-07-2025



For **ADROIT & CO**
Chartered Accountants

(CA. Tarun Agarwal)
Partner

FRN No.: 006547N / M.No.: 093945
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