

## SK-FOREST COVER

November 21, 2018

Sikkim increases forest cover by over 4 pc since 1993: CM Gangtok, Nov 21 (PTI) A plethora of initiatives for preserving biodiversity in Sikkim such as spreading mass awareness and adopting an eco-friendly policy has led to an increase of its forest cover by over four percent since 1993, Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling has said. The green cover in the tiny northeastern state has risen to 47.62 per cent in 2017 from 43.95 per cent in 1993, Chamling said at a seminar here Tuesday. The state is "very committed" about conserving biodiversity by spreading mass awareness and necessary legislation, the chief minister said. Sikkim, covering just 0.2 per cent of the geographical area of the country, has tremendous biodiversity and is a part of the global biodiversity hotspot. "We have consistently focused on how best to bring additional area under forest cover and help contribute to a greener regional landscape as the Sikkim Himalaya is a part of one of the important Global Biodiversity Hotspots", he said at the international symposium on Evergreen Oak Forests in the Eastern Himalayas. Protection and conservation measures such as Ten Minutes to Earth, 'Smritivans', Mith or Mitini Tree (adopting a tree), besides 'Paryavaran Mahotsav' have helped the state to enhance its green cover in public and private lands. Referring to the importance of oak trees, the chief minister suggested growing oak trees in agro-forestry systems to reduce the huge pressure on natural forests. "It would be vital to see that our efforts ensure that the oak forests continue to provide eco-system services to the people and environment," he said. PTI

KDK MM MM

SOURCE:- <https://www.theweek.in/wire-updates/national/2018/11/21/ces1-sk-forest%20cover.html>