

Goa takes Bhutan's cue on use of forestry in net zero goal

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Panaji: Biodiversity and climate change experts from Goa and other parts of India recently held deliberations on the role of forestry, agroforestry and land restoration in achieving India's net zero goal. The discussions saw Indian officials engaging with their Bhutanese counterparts.

The workshop aimed to identify challenges and roadblocks hindering the realisation of mitigation potential from the forestry, agroforestry and land restoration sectors.

"Different modelling studies suggest that despite best efforts and most optimistic scenarios, there will still be considerable residual emissions towards the second half of the century. In this context, the forest sector can play an important role in bridging a part of this emission gap," said professor Rajiv Kumar Chaturvedi, associate professor at BITS-Pilani, Goa Campus.

BITS Pilani Goa campus has considerable expertise in this area and it is associated with India's official national greenhouse gas inventory programme.

The workshop sought to foster partnerships among various organisations in Asia dedicated to these sectors. It was held at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences of BITS Pilani, K K Birla Goa Campus, in partnership with the IUCN CEM Forest Specialist Group, CEM South Asia, the Goa State Biodiversity Board, and CEEW, New Delhi.

The event saw participation of Namgyel Wangdi, senior programme officer of Bhutan Ecological Society, who shared perspectives on Bhutan's remarkable success in attaining the net zero goal, emphasising the significant contribution of the forest sector.

The event also saw participation from professor Mohan Kumar B, former vice-chancellor of Arunachal University and one of the authors of the National Agroforestry Policy, and Amit Garg, professor, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, and nodal officer for climate change for Goa Pradip Sarmokadam.

“The government of India has made commitments to reduce emissions and increase non-fossil electricity generation. It’s like setting goals for a better future. Achieving net zero by 2070 is a big challenge, but with smart state-level policies, it’s possible,” said Garg.