

## Report of the NITI Aayog Working Group on Himalayan Springs

In order to bring the issue of springshed management at the centre stage in the context of sustainable development in the Indian Himalayan region, NITI Ayog vide its notification No.P.12018/12/2016-RD dated 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2017 has constituted a Working group on **"Inventory and Revival of Springs of Himalaya for Water Security"**. The broad objective of setting up of this working group was to take stock of the magnitude of the problem (drying of springs, quality of water from springs), review related policies across IHR to ascertain its adequacy and gaps; review existing initiatives and best practices including inventorization and spring revival by different agencies across IHR, ascertain to what extent learning from best practices and 8 steps methodology is being integrated into spring work and ways to strengthen it; assess challenges faced by the existing initiatives and suggest policy and practice action in short, medium and long term.

A few agencies/institutions have been identified as participants to this group. These include representatives of Department of Land Resources, Govt. of India; Ministry of Environment Forest & Climate Change; Central Ground Water Board; Rural Management & Development Department, Govt. of Sikkim; ACWADAM. Pune and International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Kathmandu. The Department of Science & Technology (DST) has been designated as the lead institution with Dr Akhilesh Gupta, Adviser, DST as the convener to finalise a report on the theme.

Since the subject of Himalayan Springs entails a number of science, society and policy issues, there was a need to involve and initiate consultation with a range of stakeholders that include ministries, departments, national and state level institutions, NGOs, CSOs and individuals associated with the subject. A meeting of the stakeholder consultation was convened on Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> August, 2017 in the Department of Science & Technology. As many as 50 people belonging to government, non-governmental and autonomous organizations participated in the meeting. Based on deliberations, a number of recommendations were brought out. The meeting also set up a drafting team to prepare a draft report of the working groups along with specific recommendations.

The Drafting Team prepared a draft report which was circulated to all possible stakeholders. After receipt of comments and suggestions from them, the draft report was finalised. The final draft report was submitted to the member, NITI Aayog on 29<sup>th</sup> December,2017. NITI Aayog has advised DST to make the report available on the website of the department for wider circulation and comments from other stakeholders and members of public. The specific comments if any may be forwarded to Dr Akhilesh Gupta, Adviser, DST through email ([akhilesh.g@nic.in](mailto:akhilesh.g@nic.in)) not later than **Monday the 19<sup>th</sup> February,2018.**