

26th August 2011

Press release

NGOS reject National Action Plan on Climate change, set up set up committee to draft peoples State Action Plan on climate change

More than 40 NGOS of the state discussed the draft State Action Plan on climate change, which the government of Bihar has to develop to support the National Action Plan of Climate Change in a two day State Consultation in Patna which concluded on 26th August.

The Consultation rejected the National Action Plan on Climate Change suggested that Bihar should have an action Plan which should treat water, agriculture, forests, urban planning, health and energy in an integrated manner rather than looking at these sectors in isolation from each other. The Consultation also discussed the principles and thrust areas for different sectors and missions on water, agriculture, forests, urban planning, health etc. for the state action plan. As an outcome, the consultation also appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Dinesh Kumar Mishra, renowned water specialist and activist to draft a Peoples State Action Plan on climate change. The Consultation also witnessed the participation of Prof. Er. C P Sinha, Shri Vijay Pratap (SADED, Delhi), Shri Ajay Kumar Jha (PAIRVI), Shri Isteyaque Ahmed (AMAN), Mrs. Nivedita Jha (Nai Duniya), Ms. Anamika Priyadarshini (Associate Professor, Patna Central University) Shri Anil Prakash (expert on agriculture), Shri Raghupati Singh (Samta Gram Seva Sansthan, Shri Ranjan Kumar (NIDAN), Shri Ghanshyam (Madhupur, Jharkhand), Dr. Ravindra Pathak (Magadh Jal Jamaat, Gaya), Arjun Thapa (Nepal)

Ajay Jha from PAIRVI stated that the states are in the process of developing State Action Plan. 14 states of india have already submitted the plans. Bihar, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamilnadu and kerala are among the states which have to submit their draft yet. He added that these state action plans on climate change are being developed without any public consultations and are simply business as usual with states trying to increase their power production by 10 to 50 times, which will have adverse effect on climate. He added that all the states are trying to earn carbon credit from the forests and agriculture and do not talk about equity and gender.

Shri Vijay Pratap shared that the process in other states is highly bureaucratic and top down, which does not take into account the geography, economy and topography of the states, and suggested that Bihar should be careful of not imitate other states in developing state Plan. Dr. Dinesh Mishra said that the water is a serious concern for the state in the context of climate change and agriculture. He added that the irrigated area in the state has reduced to 33 lakh ha which presents challenges for the agriculture in state. Prof. C P Sinha said that the state should immediately pass the water policy, which is pending for more than three years. Shri Anil Prakash emphasized the state of agriculture in the state, and said that ground water situation in various districts have become serious concern and water table has gone down in many districts. He also added the GM crops have failed the farmers since last two years, who are in the dire strait without any state support. However, the consultation also welcomes govt's decision to not to allow field trials of GM Crops in the state. Shri Raghupati Singh said that traditional water bodies and common property resources have been

encroached which needs to be brought back in communities control. Shri Ravindra Pathak from Magadh Jal jamaat, Gaya said that government should encourage traditional water harvesting mechanisms and systems like ahar and pain in South Bihar. Shri Ghanshyam said that forests symbolize a symbiotic relation between human, animals and ecosystems and state should not look at it from its commercial value. Shri Ranjan singh said that urban planning and waste management needs to be improved in the face of challenges presented by climate change. He added that code for energy efficient buildings, improvement in transportation, and zero to zero decentralized waste management systems are urgently required in the state. Shri Isteyaqe emphasized better land use policy and stop land grabbing and alienation of agricultural land.

The Consultation has set up a committee which will look into various sectors in detail and come out with a peoples draft on State action Plan within a months' time. The consultation was organized by many NGOs including Beyond Copenhagen, Pairvi, SADED, Aman, and Nidan in collaboration with Oxfam India. The vote of thanks was delivered by Prabhat Jha from PAIRVI.

Signed

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