



September 11, 2012

Mr. Ajay Srivastav
Director
Great Himalayan National Park
Shamshi, District Kullu (H.P)

Dear Mr. Srivastav,

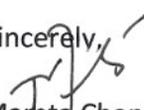
The vision behind starting Jagriti, a community based organization working in Kullu was greatly influenced by my brief association with GHNP eco zone initiatives way back in 2001. I was overwhelmed by the hospitality and effervescent spirit of people despite day to day struggle to make a living in harsh conditions. My almost zero knowledge of flora and fauna of the area got ticking during visits to the Park and probably has increased many fold over the years.

Thereafter, in 2002 while carrying out a review of socio economic interventions undertaken by the Park authorities through a local NGO exposed me to remote and isolated villages and issues around natural resources management and livelihoods. Trekking to Majhan from Nueli and returning the same night was a record of 14 hours walking, I haven't still managed to break! The socio economic development model adopted to wean off the pressure on Park to alternative livelihood options was at a nascent stage then, having potential for up-scaling and replication in the region. Benefit sharing mechanisms at village level were beginning to take root with potential and challenges of continuity and link with markets.

The intentions of securing sustainable economic returns from various activities undertaken in the area were well conceived though constrained by local capacity to translate to critical levels that trigger sustainability. Building community based institutional arrangements for wider benefit sharing still remains a big challenge in the area. The continued support of the park authorities to adopt innovative approaches to conserve the unique ecosystem is commendable and therefore, needs to be continued to harmonize conservation imperatives with people's dependence on natural resources.

I understand that efforts in recent years to build and foster community level leadership and reach out more substantially to local people, especially the poor, has raised hopes in the conservation community to steadily realizing the great potential that the GHNP holds for present and future generations.

Sincerely,


Mamta Chandar
Director

Jagriti

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