

# A Report on VishwaDharohar Utsav-2023



**Celebrated On 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2023  
at Sairopa Complex, GHNP**

Prepared by:

GHNP Administration

<https://www.greathimalayannationalpark.org/>



## Executive Summary

The Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area was declared as “World Heritage Site” by UNESCO on 25th June 2014, to commemorate and to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the inscription of this Conservation Area (GHNPCA) as World Heritage Site (WHS), a one-day workshop and cultural event was organized on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2023 at Sairopa Complex of Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP). To celebrate this event several activities like Yoga, Nature walk, Quiz competition, Nature Awareness trekking and Marathon etc, were organized by the Park authorities w.e.f. 21st June to 24th June, 2023 as Pre-events. Local school children, Tourists, Local youth from Ecozone areas participated in events.

The events had both academic & cultural sessions. Exhibits of local artifacts was the attraction of the event. During Academic session, Forest Officers shared their experiences and views for better management of World Heritage Site. Deliberations on Climate change, Human Wildlife Conflicts, Impacts of Eco- tourism and developmental projects on Forests/ Protected Areas and problems related to Waste Management were held in detail. The attendees, participants and general public showed interest in discussions and appreciated the knowledge and experience shared by experts.

The learning and outcome of the events has been compiled in the form of this report which will be useful to GHNP Managers while writing Management plans and proposing activities for better management of the WHS in future.



## Introduction:-

The Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area was declared as “World Heritage Site” by UNESCO on 25th June 2014, to commemorate and to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the inscription of this Conservation Area (GHNPCA) as World Heritage Site (WHS), a one day academic and cultural event in the form of VishwaDharoharUtsav was celebrated on 25th June, 2023 at Sairopa Complex of GHNP. To celebrate this event several activities like Yoga, Nature walk, Quiz competition, Awareness activity and Marathon etc, were organized by the department from 21<sup>st</sup> June to 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2023. The event had both academic discussion, cultural activities and exhibition for one day. The wildlife experts, forestry specialists, and senior forest officers shared their views and had elaborate discussion on different topics. The VishwaDharoharUtsav provided a platform for the exchange of knowledge, ideas and appreciation of the unique ecological wonders of GHNP.

## Pre Events:-

From 21<sup>st</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2023, various pre events such as Yoga Day, Quiz competition, Nature Walk, Marathon and Awareness activities were organized. Local people, tourist and students of various schools participated in this pre- event activities. The National Park Management honored the winners of various competitions.

## Pre Event Schedule:-

Date	Time	Details
21st June, 2023	5pm-7pm	World Yoga day for students and tourists
22nd June, 2023	10 am-1 pm	Inter School Quiz competition for schools in the eco-zone Sainj Ropa Complex (Livanal & Sany) Wl Range)
	2pm - 4pm	Nature Walk
23rd June, 2023	No time limit	Raising awareness amongst students about 'GhNP: A world heritage site'
24th June, 2023	9:30am - 11:30 pm	Marathon run for GHNP

R.S.V.P  
Great Himalayan National Park Administration  
01902 - 265320

S.No.	Date	Time	Event Detail
1	21, June 2023	5:00- 7:00 PM	World Yoga Day for students and tourists.
2	22, June 2023	10:00 AM- 1:00 PM	Quiz Competition
		2:00 PM to 4:00 PM	Nature Walk
3	23, June 2023	--	Raising awareness amongst students about



			GHNP: a world heritage site
4	24, June 2023	9:30 AM to 11:30 PM	Marathon run for GHNP

**Event Schedule on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2023: -**

Academic and cultural program were organized in this onedayeventof Vishwa Dharohar Utsav, 2023. During this event, lectures by several experts, cultural activities were held. World Heritage siteinscription: management by involving communities, Climate change; its affects, taking example of forest Fires & impacts on Protected Areas, Human Wildlife Conflict and mitigation measures, Impacts of Eco- tourism and developmental projects on Forests/ Protected Areas, topics were deliberated upon. A complete detail of schedule of workshop on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2023 was as follow:-

Schedule of Workshop on 25 <sup>th</sup> June, 2023		
Sl. No.	Time	Event
1	10:30-11:15	i) Welcome of APCCF (WL) HP
		ii) Lighting of lamp & National Song
		iii) Felicitation of dignitaries.
		iv) Inauguration of cultural activities at NLC Gate by APCCF (WL) HP
		v) Welcome address by Meera Sharma, CCF, GHNP and overview of GHNPCA.
		vi) Address by
		vii) Vote of Thanks by Anil Thakur, APCCF (WL)
<b>HIGH- TEA</b>		
2	11:30AM - 1:30PM	i) WHS Inscription: its management by involving communities by Ajit Thakur, CCF Mandi
		ii) Climate change: its effects, taking example of forest Fires& its impacts on Protected Areas by Anil Sharma,CCFBilaspur
		iii) Human Wildlife Conflicts; its mitigation measures by Anil Thakur, APCCF (WL)
		iv) Impacts of Eco-Tourism and developmental projects on Forests/ Protected Areas by BasuKaushal, CF Kullu

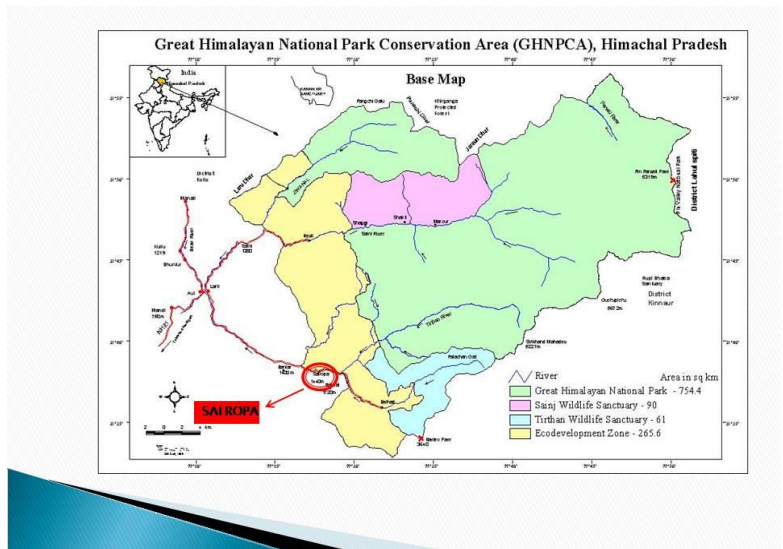


		v)	Release of booklet “Orchids of GHNP & Khokhan Wildlife sanctuary Kullu: Part-I by Addl. PCCF (Wildlife)
<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>			
3	2:00- 5:30 PM	i)	Welcome of the chief guest.
		ii)	Felicitation of Chief Guest and other dignitaries.
		iii)	Inauguration of Exhibition by the Chief Guest
		iv)	Welcome address by Meera Sharma, CCF , GHNP and overview of GHNPCA.
		v)	Chief Guest presided over the Nati competition and interacts with the community
		vi)	Address by the Chief Guest
		vii)	Prize Distribution.
		viii)	Vote of thanks by NarenderParkashBhrot,( IFS) DCF GHNP Shamshi

**Abstract of expert lecture:-**

Session started late due to heavy rain fall.Smt. Meera Sharma(IFS),CCF, GHNP. Shewelcomed all the forest officers, experts and participants/ visitors who attended the event.

She gave a brief presentation on, “*Overview of GHNPCA*”. She explained the historical background behind the creation of GHNP in the year 1999 and inscription as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, on 25th June 2014 at Doha, Qatar for its “Outstanding Universal Values” of Biodiversity Conservation. A brief description of floral and faunal biodiversity of GHNP



involving 1,000 plant species (including many medicinal herbs), 34 medicinal plant taxa



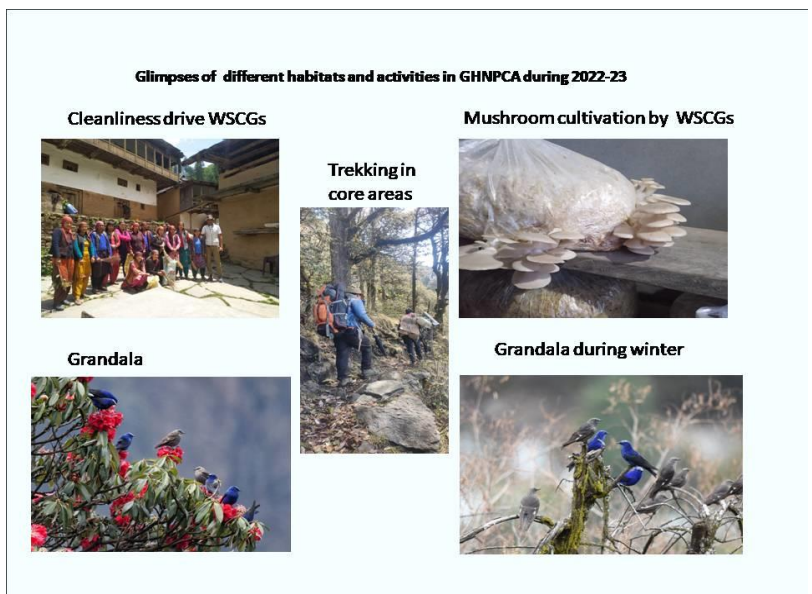
categorised as Threatened for the State of Himachal Pradesh (Vulnerable-12, Endangered-17, and Critically Endangered-5) was shared..

She informed that biodiversity surveys of GHNP in the past decade have identified 31 mammal species, 209 bird species, 12 reptile species, and 125 insect species. Total 1400 households reside in 140 villages in the 265 sq.km. of Eco-zone area towards western side of park and were earlier totally dependent for their livelihood on the NP. Therefore, the park managers

concentrated on to provide alternate source of incomes to the community in the Eco-zone area and effective steps were taken for enhancing the productivity of forest areas in the Eco-zone. Community participation especially women involvement in conservation efforts and livelihood activities is one of the main thrust of GHNP Managers.

She talked about SAHARA ,BTCA (Biodiversity Tourism Community Advancement) Society (local villagers organized closely to work with park management) formulated to address the economic impact of the park creation on community, Men & women members of eco-zone areas address issues associated with nature conservation & village livelihoods. Community-based ecotourism (food, accommodation, guide, porters) and other alternative income generation

activities are being undertaken. GHNP assisted BTCA in different schemes, shown as under :-



- Briquettes & basket making using pine needles
- Pickle, jam and juice making
- Saving and lending in groups for production purposes
- Organic farming and vermin composting
- Conservation and propagation of medicinal herbs
- Community-based ecotourism
- Apricot seed oil extraction
- Craftwork and souvenirs
- Wage employment
- Conservation and Propagation of Medicinal Herbs

The BTCA facilitates the communities in asset building, rationalization of the use of natural resources, socio-economic development and fundraising and provides market support – all with the aim of reducing dependency on the park's resources and to provide both poor women and men the opportunity to make their own choices about income generation activity and to raise their voices regarding GHNP planning.

She informed that the park administration is trying to help the local communities through various livelihood activities and in turn the communities are helping the park administration in protection and conservation related activities.

## COMPOSITION OF BTCA

- President
- Vice president
- Secretary
- Cashier
- Members
- This organisation facilitate the work of 52 Self help groups
- These groups save 1 Rs per day at present more than 8,60,000 Rs are in their account



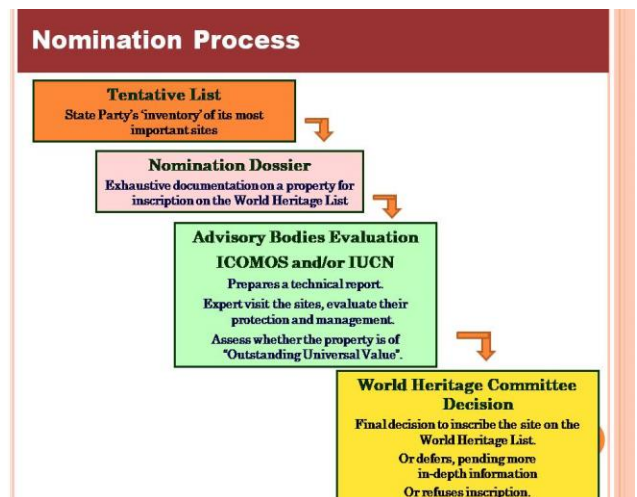
**World Heritage Site (WHS) Inscription- its Management by involving communities (Sh. Ajit Thakur, CCF Mandi:**

Sh. Ajit Thakur, CCF Mandi, first of all expressed his views about the historical background behind the World Heritage Site Convention held on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 1972 during 17<sup>th</sup> session General Conference of UNESCO. He informed that there are 1157 properties inscribed by the World Heritage Committee on the World Heritage List (900 cultural, 218 natural and 39 mixed sites in over 167 countries). He gave brief description about criteria for Inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List which include: -



- A site must have ‘Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)’
- A site must meet the conditions of ‘Integrity’
- A site must meet the conditions of ‘Authenticity’
- A site must have adequate protection and management systems in place

He further informed about the nomination process of WHS by which a property is





inscribed on the World Heritage List. The nomination document is the primary basis on which the World Heritage Committee considers the inscription of the properties on the World Heritage List. Nominations will be forwarded to the Advisory Bodies for further evaluation.

He emphasized that managing WHS requires active involvement and participation from the communities themselves. Engaging local communities in the park management activities. Promoting pride in their cultural identity are major aspects of preservation. This can be achieved through community-led initiatives, cultural festivals, workshops, and educational programs. And raising awareness in local communities about the importance of World Heritage Site is essential. Educating local communities about the significance of World Heritage Site offers a chance to built-up the sense of responsibility towards its management and conservation.

### Factors identified by World Heritage Committee

- **Expansion of the property**... incorporate Khirganga National Park within GHNP
- Notification of **Tirthan Wildlife Sanctuary as a National Park**
- **Rights issues with respect to local communities and indigenous peoples** in the Tirthan and Sainj Wildlife Sanctuaries
- **Impacts from resource use** (in particular grazing and collection of medicinal plants)

### Human Wildlife Conflicts; its mitigation measures by Anil thakur, APCCF (WL)HP

#### Shimla:-

**Sh. Anil Thakur, APCCF (WL)** informed that Human population growth, agricultural intensification and wealth creation has limited the living places and resources for both Humans and animals. Human wildlife conflicts refer to the negative interactions and disputes that arise between humans and wildlife interests and activities overlap. As human populations expand and encroach upon natural habitats, wildlife is often displaced from their traditional habitats, leading to increased encounters and conflicts with humans. He expressed that Livestock predation is also a significant aspect of human wildlife



#### **Causes**

- As human populations expand into wild animal habitats.
- Natural Wildlife territory is displaced.
- Reduction in the availability of natural prey/food sources.
- New resources created by human draw wildlife resulting in conflict.



conflict. Predatory animals such as leopard, Bear etc. sometimes attack and kill livestock, which can have severe financial implications for farmers.

It can result in economic losses and impacting the livelihoods of individuals who depend on these animals for sustenance of income. It was stated that Some wild animals, such as monkeys, and elephants raid agricultural fields and destroy crops, causing financial losses for farmers and aggravating conflicts between humans and wildlife. Further he added that humans and wildlife often compete for limited resources like



water, food and shelter, especially in areas with scarce natural resources. This competition sometime escalates into conflicts as both parties try to secure their needs. Certain wildlife species, such as bears, leopards, and snakes can pose a direct threat to human safety. Attacks on humans can result in injuries or fatalities, leading to fear and anger toward the animals involved.

He further emphasized that Human-Wildlife conflicts becomes one of the fundamental aspects of Wildlife Management because it threatens both wildlife and human. The following Measures need to be undertaken to mitigate the incidents of wildlife conflict: -

**Habitat Conservation:** Protecting and preserving natural habitats is essential for wildlife populations to thrive and reduce encounters with humans. Establishing National Parks, Wildlife preserves, and protected areas can provide safe space for wildlife while minimizing conflict with humans.



**Photo Credit by: Vinay Kumar, Fgd**



**Land-Use planning:** Implementing effective land-use planning and zoning can help to minimize human-wildlife conflict. Ensuring that both humans and animals have the space they need for their basic activities can also help in to counter the incidents of Human wildlife conflict.

**Education and awareness:** Promoting education and awareness programmes for both local communities and visitors is essential. Increasing knowledge about wildlife behavior, ecological roles, and the importance of coexistence can create positive attitudes and behaviors towards wildlife.

**Community Engagement:**Involving local communities in conservation efforts is also important. Encouraging community participation, establishing platforms, and integrating local knowledge and practices can help build understanding, reduce conflict, and develop sustainable solutions.

**Alternative Livelihoods:** Providing alternative livelihood options for communities living near wildlife habitats can reduce their dependence on natural resources that may conflict with wildlife. This can involve supporting ecotourism, sustainable agriculture practice, or offering training for alternative income-generating activities.

**Balancing Conservation and development:** Resolving human wildlife conflict requires finding a balance between the conservation of wildlife and the socio-economic needs of local communities. This involves engaging stakeholders, implementing sustainable land-use practices and promoting awareness and education.

**Technology and innovation:** Embracing technological advancements can aid in conflict mitigation. For example, using drones, camera traps, or early warning systems can help monitor wildlife movements and detect potential conflicts in advance.

### Outcomes of conflict

- Injury and loss of life of humans and wildlife.
- Crop damage, livestock depredation, predation of managed wildlife stock.
- Damage to human property.
- Trophic cascades.
- Destruction of habitat.
- Collapse of Wildlife populations and reduction of geographic ranges.



## Impacts of Eco-Tourism and developmental projects on Forests/ Protected Areas: by

Smt.BasuKaushal, IFS, CF Kullu:-

Smt. BasuKaushal, CF Kullu emphasized that Ecotourism is all about bringing together efforts to protect nature, engage local communities and promote sustainable travel practices. It aims to ensure that natural resources such as forests, wildlife are conserved for future generations. Ecotourism is to raise awareness and educate local community and visitors about the importance of environment conservation. It provides opportunities for visitors to learn about ecosystems, wildlife and conservation efforts, promoting a deeper understanding of the natural world, It strives to empower and support; local residents by promoting their participation in tourism activities, fostering cultural exchange and creating economic opportunities, thus contributing to community development. Eco-tourism encourages responsible travel behavior that minimizes negative impacts on the environment, such as reducing waste, conserving energy and water and supporting eco-friendly accommodation and transportation options. Eco-tourism respects the cultural heritage and traditions of local communities.

### Positives Sides...

- **Community Empowerment:** Capacity building and education opportunities
  - engaging local communities in decision-making processes and providing them with a sense of ownership over their natural resources.
  - improved self-esteem, increased community cohesion, and the preservation of traditional knowledge and cultural practices
  - Capacity Building through training and improved financial inclusion
- Increased Funding support esp. for PAs for conservation
- Revenue generation for State
- Global forums – improved standing through success stories – eg. GHNP as UNESCO World Heritage



often increase in amount of waste generated by the tourist. Without proper waste management this can be harmful to the environment and create negative impact on Eco system.

According to her viewson impact of Development Activities on Forests and PAs. Construction activities associated with dams can lead to the clearing of forests, destroying vegetation and disrupting ecosystems, which can result in the loss of valuable forest ecosystems and wildlife habitats for numerous plants and animal species. Other activities like construction of roads and development activities can result in the direct clearing of forests and

vegetation cover, leasing to habitat loss and fragmentation. The construction process, including clearing land and earthworks, can cause surface erosion. Construction activities can destabilize slopes and increase the risk of landslide and rockfalls. Road can fragment natural habitats into smaller isolated patches, making it challenging for plants and animals to move and disperse. This fragmentation can lead to the loss of habitat connectivity and negatively impact biodiversity.

She also informed that the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) is a systematic process that identifies and evaluates the potential impacts of proposed projects, plans or various component of environment. Conducting an EIA is essential as it helps us to understand the potential disturbances a project may cause to the environmental equilibrium. The Environment process contributes to sustainable development by ensuring that projects are undertaken in an environmentally responsible manner.

Due to Heavy Rain Fall and schedule adjustment, the presentation of two individuals, Sh. Anil Sharma, CCF, Bilaspur, and Sh. VarunBharti, President, Tirthan Conservation & Development association Valley Tourism Society were skipped to complete the other activities of VishwaDharoharUtsav 2023.

### Impact of Development Activities on Forests and PAs

- Habitat fragmentation
- Biodiversity loss (Flora/Fauna)
- Deterioration of the environment through depletion of resources (Air, water and soil)
- Ecosystem destruction
- Pollution ...
- DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS:
  - HEPS/CONSTRUCTION OF DAMS
  - CONSTRUCTION OF ROADS



## Cultural Events:-

APCCF(WL) Sh. Anil Thakur, inaugurated the community exhibition on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2023. In this Utsav, exhibition for information about Great Himalayan National Park, food festival, products made by Self Help Group, Organic farming and exhibition of products by JICA Project were organized.



In this festival twelve Women self-help groups participated in folk dance competition and the prizes were distributed to the winners. Students from ten schools and women from ten Gram Panchayats of Ecozone areas participated in various folk-dance competition organized during this Utsav.



## Closing Ceremony:-

The festival was concluded on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2023. Chief Parliamentary Secretary, Sh. Sunder Singh Thakur presided over as the Chief Guest in the closing ceremony. He acknowledged the people and park management authority efforts in the past to protect the national park, which is also a World Heritage Site and is a jewel in the crown of Banjar area. The chief guest Sh. Sunder Singh Thakur spoke about the importance of Wildlife, Forests and Water resources to human beings and appreciated Forest Department & Park Management for organizing this program. The chief guest also congratulated all winner candidates of various competitions for achieving the top positions in different activities organized by the Park managers during this festival. He appealed to local people to take maximum participation in National Park conservation and protection measures. This WHS brings a lot of laurels to Seraj valley so it's their prime duty to maintain the status of WHS. National Park, and nearby Protected areas are the earning source for them which will continue for a long time in the form of Ecotourism in a sustainable manner.



After attending cultural activities and exhibition, the chief guest released 'Orchids of GHNP & Khokhan WLS Kullu Part-I', and Sh. Anil Thakur, Addl. Pr.CCF (Wildlife) released the documentary film made by Sh. Vinay Kumar, Forest Guard of GHNP on "Population Estimation on Western Tragopan". Which was much appreciated by the all present there. Local Peoples, tourists/visitor, who so



ever participated in this festival extended their special appreciation to GHNP management and appreciated the decision to celebrate this event annually.

The event ended with vote of thanks by, Sh. Narender Parkash Bharot, IFS,



Divisional Forest Officer Great Himalayan National Park, Shamshi to all the participants and experts. The event success was attributed to Sh. Anil Thakur, IFS, Addl. Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests (Wild Life) HP, Smt. Meera Sharma, IFS CCF Great Himalayan National Park, Shamshi, Sh. Hans Raj, HPFS Assistant Conservator of Forests, GHNP, Sh. Parmanand, Range Forest Officer, Wild Life Range Tirthan and with the help of all other officials Staff of GHNP Circle.

*Local women groups recited Lamanu (local departing song) before leaving festival place singing that they will remember the event, happiness they felt, moments of joy shared with National Park managers and other fellows of the valley and hope, this festival continues in next year too.*





Glimpses of VishavDharoharUtsav organized on 25th June 2023 at GHNP SaiRopa Complex



Glimpses of VishavDharoharUtsav organized on 25th June 2023 at GHNP SaiRopa Complex



Glimpses of VishavDharoharUtsav organized on 25th June 2023 at GHNP SaiRopa Complex



Glimpses of VishavDharoharUtsav organized on 25th June 2023 at GHNP SaiRopa Complex

