

Exploring Gross Environmental Product (GEP) for Himachal Pradesh: A Collaborative Initiative

In a significant step towards redefining sustainable growth metrics, IIT Mandi hosted a meeting with delegates from the National Institute of Himalayan Environment and Dr. Anil P. Joshi, the visionary behind the Gross Environmental Product (GEP) framework, to explore opportunities for implementing GEP in Himachal Pradesh.

The discussion focused on integrating **lifestyle and culture** as vital parameters for GEP, leveraging the unique socio-ecological fabric of the state. It was proposed that IIT Mandi would provide human resource support while HESCO would lead the development of GEP indicators and frameworks. A proposal will be submitted to the **National Mission on Himalayan Studies (NMHS), MoEFCC** for potential funding to advance this initiative.

Dr. Anil P. Joshi, Founder of HESCO and Padma Bhushan awardee, remarked:

"The Gross Environmental Product offers a paradigm shift in how we measure progress—valuing nature not as an externality but as a core economic asset. Himachal Pradesh, with its cultural richness and ecological diversity, can lead the way in demonstrating how sustainable growth and traditional wisdom go hand in hand."

Prof. Laxmidhar Behera, Director of IIT Mandi, emphasized:

"At IIT Mandi, we are committed to translating visionary ideas into actionable frameworks. Through this collaboration, we aim to create scalable models for environmental accounting that integrate culture, livelihoods, and ecology—ensuring that development in the Himalayas is both inclusive and sustainable."

Dr. Uday Kala, Chair of C3DAR, added:

"This initiative aligns perfectly with C3DAR's mission of fostering climate resilience and disaster risk reduction. GEP can serve as a crucial tool for policymakers to make informed decisions that balance economic aspirations with ecological integrity."

This partnership aims to make Himachal Pradesh a frontrunner in adopting a balanced growth model, setting an example for other states to follow.