

Submitted Abstract

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First Author First Name Last Name	Smriti (1) Basnett
Submitting Author First Name Last Name	Smriti Basnett
Correspondence	smritibasnett@iisc.ac.in
Co-Authors >> E-Mails will be not listed	Ghuman, Sartaj (2)
Organisations	1: Future Earth Global Hub South Asia, Divecha Centre for Climate Change, Indian Institute of Science. 2: Freelancer - Wildlife Biologist, Writer, Mountaineer and Artist
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Abstract

This is not a success story. It is merely reportage of facts as they are on the ground.

In the quest to understand the changing climate, landscape, culture, livelihood and life of the yak herders and the high altitude dwellers, we set up a hut at 2,800 meters and 4,800 meters, in Lachung Valley, located in the north Sikkim Himalayas, a region dominated by mountains, glaciers, alpine forest and cold desert.

Seven months were spent in the mountains; reccing glaciers, monitoring glacier melt, crossing high mountain passes, and documenting the life of the people and the yak herders.

This talk and the discourse includes our struggle in setting up the research hut, preliminary observations from the river runoff and sky charts, and narratives from the locals and the yak herders about the changing environment and the very interesting self-government system known as Dzumsa (dzoms-sa) that was established during the first half of the 19th century to provide structure and cohesion for societies and is still prevalent in North Sikkim.