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Himalayas are the most dominating geographical feature of India having impacted the life of millions of people not only of India but also of entire sub-continent. The Himalayan ecosystem is considered as very fragile and diverse but vital to the ecological security of the Indian landmass, through providing forest cover, feeding perennial rivers that are the source of drinking water, irrigation, and hydropower, conserving biodiversity, providing a rich base for high value agriculture, and spectacular landscapes for sustainable tourism. The Himalayan ecosystem is vulnerable and susceptible to the impacts and consequences of various climatic and non-climatic factors. These include; changes on account of natural causes, climate change resulting from anthropogenic emissions and developmental paradigms of the modern society.

In order to develop better understanding of the coupling between the Himalayan ecosystem and the climate factors while addressing also the protection of a fragile ecosystem, the Government of India has launched a National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE) as part of National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC). The Department of Science & Technology is coordinating and implementing the mission in collaboration with several other central ministries and 12 Himalayan States.

I am indeed happy that a knowledge portal has been set up by NMSHE for making the knowledge on Himalayas available to the users and community which will slowly be developed into a pan-Himalayan knowledge repository. I am confident that the scientists, Himalayan community and people at large will be greatly benefited by the content of the portal. I understand plans are afoot to enrich the portal with several new information and details concerning Himalayan ecosystem in the time to come.

I wish the portal a grand success!