

Embassy of India
Thimphu

**Press Release: Virtual Conference on Organic Farming between Stakeholders
from Bhutan and Sikkim, India**

The Embassy organised a virtual conference today on “Organic Farming” between stakeholders from Bhutan and Sikkim, India. Speaking at the event, Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj said that, “This conference is another effort towards further expanding our bilateral cooperation in the agricultural sector, including in the trade of organic agri-products”.

The Indian state of Sikkim, which borders Bhutan and has made impressive gains in transforming into the first 100 percent organic state in India, is a natural partner for Bhutan given the similar geographical conditions. Previously, a team from Sikkim conducted a session on “Organic Farming: Value Chain Development” during the Bhutan-India Start-up Summit held on 28-29 February 2020 in Thimphu.

As a follow-up to the previous interaction, the virtual meeting was held today with the objective of initiating longer-term engagement and knowledge-sharing between Sikkim and Bhutan including consultancy support for replicating some of the best-practices developed by Sikkim in the area of organic farming and related matters, particularly in the context of Bhutan’s bid to become a 100 percent organic farming nation.

The event was attended by senior officials from the Royal Government of Bhutan including Dasho Ugyen Penjore, Officiating Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture & Forests and Ms. Kinlay Tshering, Director, Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture & Forests, as well as representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economic Affairs, National Organic Flagship Program, National Centre for Organic Agriculture, Department of Agricultural Marketing & Co-operatives, Department of Livestock, and Bhutan Agriculture and Food Regulatory Authority. The Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry was represented by its President Aum Phub Zam, Secretary General Mr. Sangay Dorji and other officials.

Speakers at the event from the private sector of Bhutan included Dasho Ugen Tsechup Dorji (Proprietor and Vice Chairman, Singye Group of Companies & Zimdra Industries) and Mr. Sangay Needup (Vice President, Horticulture Association of Bhutan, and Promoter of Bhutan Smart Shop). Over 50 representatives from Bhutan’s private sector also actively participated in the programme.

From the Indian side, the participants included Ms. Neeraja Adidam, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of India; Mr. Rinzing Chewang Bhutia, Secretary, Agriculture Department, Government of Sikkim; and representatives from the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Sikkim Organic Farming Development Agency, Animal Husbandry Department of Sikkim, Horticulture Department of Sikkim, and Farmers Producer Organisation.

Thimphu
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