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Eighth AGM of SOHAM-Nepal Kicked off in Kathmandu



The eighth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Society of Hydrologists and Meteorologists-Nepal (SOHAM-Nepal) was organized on 9th October 2009 at New Baneshwor, Kathmandu. The meeting at first passed a condolence bill to the life member of SOHAM-Nepal Mr. Suresh Maharjan for his untimely demise at Everest region during a research study last year. In the meeting, Mr. Dhiraj Pradhananga, the general secretary of the SOHAM-Nepal, presented the progress report of the fiscal year 2008/09 and proposed the programs for the fiscal year 2009/10. The meeting also decided to have the general member fee as NRs. 500 and life member fee as NRs. 5000 to be effective from mid of November. Mr. Dharmendra Rajbhandari, secretary of SOHAM-Nepal, presented the financial report of the fiscal year 2008/09. The AGM was attended by high profile dignitaries having national and international recognition.

ACTIVITIES (2009-2010)

Celebration of Nepal National Water Week 2010

(Contributed by Dilli Ram Bhattarai, The Small Earth Nepal)

A week long program titled "Nepal National Water Week 2010" with the theme – 'Clean Water for a Healthy World', and with the slogan – 'Communicating Water Quality; Challenges and Opportunities' was organized from 17th March to 23rd March 2010 in Nepal to celebrate World Water Day (March 22) and World Meteorological Day (March 23) by collaborative action of more than fifty different governmental, non governmental organizations, civil societies, and professional organizations, academic institutions. SOHAM-Nepal had also a great opportunity to be a part of the program. The program was organized to disseminate the message of importance of water quality and water scarcity to life and growing risk with them. Major programs of the water week 2010 were online photography competition, street drama, virtual academy course on hydrological modeling, school level on-the-spot art and poem competitions, an interaction program with Constitutional



Assembly members regarding water resources and climate change, training on groundwater management and field visit to Sundarijal area for the field observation of groundwater recharge area for master's level students and a national level symposium on 'Communicating Water Quality: Challenges and Opportunities'.

Opening ceremony of the Nepal National Water Week 2010 was organized at Kathmandu on 17 March. The Chief Guest of the program was Dr. Yubaraj Khatiwada, then Vice-Chairperson of National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal.

The Chief Guest in the program pointed out the need of planned actions from government level for the development of water resources. He emphasized on sustainable utilization of the resources for the development of nation. During the formal closing of NNWW, the Chief Guest Hon. Balkrishna Khand, Minister, Ministry of Irrigation, thanked the organizing team for such events and raising water related issues among the general people and policy makers for mainstreaming in national policy. He committed there that the Government is always ready to work in collaboration with non governmental, private and other agencies to address any issues.

Different informative materials were also published during NNWW-2010. Water quality guide book- '*Jal, Jal Pradushan ra Jal Samrakshan: Samanya Jankariin'* Nepali was one of the important publications of the program. The various programs were actively participated and there was positive feedback from the participants.

SOHAM TALK PROGRAMS

Prof. Gordon Young, 18 Nov 2010

On 18 November 2010, Prof. Gordon Young, President of International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS), presented a paper in the SOHAM-Nepal talk program titled "The Challenges of Global Water Management in 2020: with a focus on the Himalayan Region" at Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) jointly organized by SOHAM Nepal, IAHS-Nepal, IHP-Nepal and The Small Earth Nepal (SEN). The talk program was attended by more than 50 scientists from hydrology and meteorology background from Nepal. In the program, Professor Young shared his experiences and emphasized that water quality, ground water scarcity, water related extreme events as the challenges in water management in 2020. Prof. Young had shown some scary figures of rapid melting of glaciers in Himalayan regions and formation of glacial lakes for drawing the attention of participants.

Dr. Gerald Spreitzhofer, 11 Nov 2010

SOHAM-Nepal and Department of Hydrology and Meteorology (DHM) jointly organized a talk program on 11 November 2010 with Dr. Gerald Spreitzhofer, meteorologist at the University of Vienna at hall of DHM, Kathmandu on 'MetGIS mountain weather forecasts'. On the program Dr. Spreitzhofer discussed on a high-resolution, internationally applicable mountain weather forecast system (MetGIS) combines the output of meteorological forecast models with terrain models. The system is perfectly also applicable for Nepal and might in the future also be used in combination with the WRF model. It has already been developed some prototypes for the Khumbu region and other parts of Nepal, and Bhutan and India will use the system operationally from the start of this winter.

The talk program was chaired by Mr. Kiran Shankar Yogacharya, Chairperson of SOHAM-Nepal and was coordinated by Mr. Jagadishwor Karmacharya, Senior Meteorologist, DHM.

Mr. Mani Ratna Shakya, 16 July 2010

SOHAM-Nepal and Meteorological Forecasting Division of Department of Hydrology and Meteorology jointly organized a talk program by Mr. Mani Ratna Shakya on 16 July 2010 in the meeting hall of DWIDP, Pulchowk, Lalitpur. On the talk program Mr. Shakya highlighted the impacts of variation in distribution of rainfall with space and time in the country's agricultural productivity and to the economy of the nation. He presented a preliminary study on monsoon rain for the period from 2001-2009 which showed a slight alteration in rainfall pattern in the country. The rainfall in the country in the month of June is significantly decreasing with less amount of rain falling below the normal value while the month August is observed to be the wettest month rather than the month July.

Ms. Georgina Drew, 8 April 2010



As a regular talk program of SOHAM Nepal, a SOHAM talk program was conducted on 8th April 2010 at Department of Hydrology and Meteorology, Babarmahal by Ms. Georgina Drew, researcher from Anthropology Department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA titled "From River Goddess to Hot System: Socio-Cultural and Ecological Complexity along the Ganges River". In the program, Ms. Drew outlined the range of socio-cultural and ecological concerns for the health of the Bhagirathi River with emphasis on perspectives of social movement actors opposing the projects. In highlighting main points from her research, she addressed the numerous tensions over hydro-electric development, glacier melt, and climate change along the river's course. Amidst the ongoing debates over glacier retreat within India, she offered key reasons why policy makers and planners should be concerned about maintaining flow in the river as they are about tackling pollution.

Mr. Kiran Shankar Yogacharya, Chairperson of SOHAM Nepal, chaired the program and shared his knowledge on several aspects of water. The program was attended by more than 45 participants from different organizations and institutions.

Mr. Santosh Nepal, 8 Dec 2009

On 8 December 2009, Santosh Nepal, a PhD Student at Friedrich Schiller University of Jena, Germany had a presentation titled Demonstration of Kosi River Basin Information System (KosiRBIS) organized by SOHAM Nepal in Kathmandu. In his lecture, he shared that the sustainable water resource management requires data and information from various components to understand the system dynamics adequately. Among the participants, Mr. Nepal further emphasized that the adaptable tools and methods are needed to elaborate information, develop understanding and strategies of the systems.

Dr. Prasamsa Singh, 20 Nov 2009

SOHAM Nepal organized a talk program with title "Characteristics of Diurnal Variation in Summer Precipitation over the Central Tibetan Plateau, Central India, and Southern Himalayan Foothills" with Dr. Prasamsa Singh at the Meeting Hall in the Department of Irrigation, Jawalakhel on 20 November 2009. On the program Dr. Singh presented some findings of the research on diurnal variation of rainfall over the central Tibetan Plateau, central India, and the southern Himalayan foothills using data acquired by the Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission (TRMM) during the summer monsoon season from 1998–2007.



Consultancy Work from SOHAM Nepal

(Contributed by Kiran Shankar Yogacharya, SOHAM Nepal)

A National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management has been approved by the Government of Nepal on 11 October 2009. It has identified early warning as a priority action. But it does not include a specific strategy for Early Warning System. In this regard, Ministry of Environment in association with the Ministry of Home Affairs felt the necessity of having a National Strategy for Early Warning of Natural Hazards in Nepal, that is an inseparable component of the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management.

In this regard, a contract for consulting services for development of a National Strategy for Early Warning of Natural Hazards in Nepal was made between Practical Action Nepal Office and Mercy Corps in Nepal, and Society of Hydrologists and Meteorologists-Nepal (SOHAM-Nepal) on 4th February 2010. The work was carried out under the coordination of the SOHAM-Nepal Chairperson Mr. Kiran Shankar Yogacharya, and has been approved recently.

Most disasters in Nepal are related to flood and other water-related hazards; however, the strategy also accommodate early warning for other hazards like landslide, earthquake, fire, lightning etc. The strategy has identified 11 strategic outputs and 61 activities to achieve the objectives within a period of 25 years. The strategy is based on early warning systems and experiences already available within the country, DRR strategy and policy, the Hyogo Framework for Action and involves relevant authorities and stakeholders.

International Graduate Conference on Climate Change and People in Kathmandu

The first ever in this kind, International Graduate Conference on Climate Change and People kicked off in Nepal, the roof of the world, from 15 to 19 November 2010. Experts from various fields including biodiversity, climate change science, water resources, natural hazards, policy equity and ethnics were present. They shared their knowledge among the delegation of over 150 people from 17 different countries from all around the world. The conference focused on multidisciplinary capacity building of graduate youths; therefore the graduate students participated in the lecture sessions, interaction with experts, group discussions, panel discussions and forming network for communicating climate change. The conference was organized jointly by The Small Earth Nepal (SEN) and Consortium for Capacity Building (CCB), University of Colorado, USA with the base funding of Asia Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN). Department of Hydrology and Meteorology, Government of Nepal was one of the co-organisers of the conference. The conference concluded with the message of 'unifying together instead of blaming to fight against climate change'. The conference has also a declaration for the delegates who would be participating at the Conference of Parties (COP-16) of UNFCCC to be held in Mexico this year. The major issues raised were to fulfill data gap through intensive research, youth networking for communicating climate change, economic support to affected people, fair and equitable distribution of resources and climate fund. Moreover, developing alternative livelihood options for vulnerable communities, introducing and promoting indigenous knowledge were also other key issues discussed in the conference. The conference also recognized women, children and marginalized people as the most vulnerable group and demanded to make special provision and mechanism for their adaptation. Furthermore, Eco Generation Network has been initiated among the delegates and beyond to share the information regarding research and findings related to climate change and society. Eco Generation newsletters were published each day of the conference which remained a key attraction among the participants.



Call for Papers

Society of Hydrologists and Meteorologists-Nepal (SOHAM-Nepal) announces submission of abstracts and papers for its next issue of annual journal – Journal of Hydrology and Meteorology, Vol. 8, No. 1. We accept unpublished journal papers on weather, climate and water related issues in the Himalayan regions. It also intends to include relevant areas like climate change, atmospheric and water pollution, floods, droughts, desertification, glaciology and many others. This issue will be published in September 2011.

Submission of Full Paper: 23 March 2011

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Condolence



Mr. Pancha Ratna Shakya, Life Member of SOHAM-Nepal and Senior Divisional Meteorologist of Department of Hydrology and Meteorology passed away on 31 May 2010.

SOHAM-Nepal expresses deep sorrow and extends heartfelt condolence to bereaved families and friends, and pray for eternal peace to the departed soul.

