



Convention on Biological Diversity

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ENGLISH ONLY

REGIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR THE ASIAN REGION ON
COMMUNITY PROTOCOLS, INDICATORS ON
TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND CUSTOMARY
SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIODIVERSITY UNDER THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Thimphu, Bhutan, 17 - 21 October 2016

INFORMATION NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS

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The Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) and CBD Secretariat in consultation with the National Environment Commission Secretariat (NECS), Bhutan has prepared travel advisory to facilitate your training participant's travel to Thimphu, Bhutan. Please read the travel advisory before traveling to Bhutan.

1. Opening and registration

The Regional Training Workshop for the Asian Region on Community Protocols, Indicators on Traditional Knowledge and Customary Sustainable Use of Biodiversity under the CBD will be held from 17 to 21 October 2016 in Thimphu, Bhutan. **Arrival is on 16 October 2016 (Sunday) and departure is on 22 October 2016 (Saturday).**

The meeting will start at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, 17 October 2016, and registration will take place at the venue of the meeting from 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. the same day.

2. Venue

The meeting will be held at:

Ro-Chog Pel Hotel

Jazam, Chang Gewog

Thimphu, Bhutan

Post Box Number: 828

Mobile Number: +975-17119091 / +975-17111987

E-mail: rochogpelhotel@gmail.com

Website: www.rochogpel.com

3. Working language of the meeting

The meeting will be held in English.

4. Documents

Participants will receive a USB with meeting documents and relevant documents will be available for participants of the meeting. All documents for the meeting can be found at the following link:



<https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=A8JWS-2016-03>

5. General information on access to Thimphu, Bhutan



There will be a bus from Paro International Airport to the hotel and back to the Airport upon your arrival to and departure from Thimphu, Bhutan. The AIPP Secretariat will compile travel itineraries and send it to the NECS for airport pickup and drop off. Paro International Airport is a small airport so you should not have any problems.

Once you arrive at the Paro International Airport, you will go through the immigration and collect your bags and go through the customs.

After you exit from the custom, kindly look for NECS staff holding a placard of the workshop. The Staff will direct you to the bus. The bus will bring you from the airport to the hotel in Thimphu which is about an hour drive.

If you face any problems at the airport and need some help please contact:

- Mr. Karma C. Nyedrup: Mobile: + 975 17 64 65 66

Information about Bhutan

Bhutan is a small, landlocked country with an area of 38,394 sq.km situated on the southern slope of the Eastern Himalaya, bordering China to its North and India to its South, East and West. The country is almost entirely mountainous with altitudes ranging from 7,500 to 150 metres, within a short north-south distance of 170 kilometres. Straddling the two major Indo-Malayan and Palaearctic biogeographic realms, Bhutan is part of the Eastern Himalayan region which contains parts of three global biodiversity hotspots, 60 ecoregions, 330 Important Bird Areas, 53 Important Plant Areas, and a large number of wetlands including 29 Ramsar sites (ICIMOD, 2010).

Information about Thimphu

The Kingdom's capital city is home to approximately 100,000 inhabitants, which is the main center of commerce, religion and government in the country. Thimphu has abundance of restaurants, internet cafes, nightclubs and shopping centers, however it still retains its' cultural identity and values amidst the signs of modernization.

The juxtaposition of ancient tradition and modernity make Thimphu the ideal location for visitors to break away from their work and just immerse themselves in the lifestyle of contemporary Bhutanese. There are several attractions such as the Tashichho Dzong built in 1641 by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal; National Memorial Chorten, where elderly Bhutanese people circumambulate throughout the day; there is a Buddha Dordenma Statue measuring of 51.5 meters, making it one of the largest statues of Buddha in the world. The statue is made of bronze and is gilded in gold; there is a Folk Heritage Museum which gives you a glimpse of the traditional Bhutanese lifestyle, in addition to artifacts from rural households; it also displays an impressive collection of typical household objects, tools and equipment; there is a Centenary Farmer's Market located below the main town, near the Wangchhu River, Thimphu's weekend market is by far the largest domestic market for the farmers in Bhutan. Farmers come from all over the country to sell their farm products in the market; Simtokha Dzong modeled after the Gyal Gyad Tshel Institute of Ralung (Tibet) and is quite distinctive as its Utse or central tower has 12 sides. A large statue of Yeshay Gonpo (Mahakala) the chief protective deity of Bhutan is housed inside the Utse.

6. Visa information



The Royal Government of Bhutan requires that your passport be valid for 6 months from the date of your arrival in Bhutan. This means your passport should be valid until May 2017. Bhutan does not have visa on arrival facility. For participants of the workshop, the National Environment Commission Secretariat (NECS) will facilitate issuance of visa. For this, the participants will have to fill-up a visa application form for Bhutan to be sent by Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP). The duration of the stay is recommended to reflect the travel dates, arrival date in Bhutan and departure date.

The duly filled-up visa application form along with a photocopy of the passport will have to be submitted to: ale@aippnet.org and nuri@aippnet.org. on or before 2 September 2016. All the forms and related documents will be submitted to the NECS. The NECS will issue a pre-approval visa letter to be sent to all participants. This letter will have to be presented during check-in either in Druk Air or Bhutan Airlines counter. The visa will be issued at the Paro International Airport at the time of arrival upon presenting the pre-approved visa letter. Please make sure to print 2 copies and bring it with you when traveling to Bhutan. The Immigration will charge a visa fee of US \$40.00 at the counter. Please make sure to have this US dollar amount in cash with you when you travel to Bhutan, which will be reimbursed along with your ticket and related cost.

7. Health requirements

A proof of yellow fever vaccine is required only for those arriving into Bhutan from countries with risk of yellow fever transmission.

For more information, please consult a medical professional with regard to the vaccination requirements for your travel.

8. Hotel information

A block booking has been made on behalf of all sponsored participants at the **Ro-Chog Pel Hotel**. Participants planning to arrive earlier for personal reasons (earlier than required for the meeting taking into account flight arrivals) should contact the hotel directly. Participants needing accommodation prior to or after the meeting shall bear the additional cost.

Accommodation facilities:

- Bar
- Wireless high-speed internet access
- Copier, fax, printing
- Conference facilities
- Banquet facilities
- Foreign currency exchange
- Front desk services
- Laundry service
- Luggage storage

Sponsored participants

All sponsored participants are pre-booked at the Ro-Chog Pel Hotel. This includes a single room, breakfast, lunch, dinner and internet access. The hotel information is listed below:

RO-CHOG PEL HOTEL

Jazam, Chang Gewog

Thimphu, Bhutan

Post Box Number: 828

Mobile Number: +975-17119091 / +975-17111987

E-mail address: rochogpelhotel@gmail.com

Website: www.rochogpel.com

Non-sponsored participants

Non-sponsored participants are encouraged to make their own reservations at the Ro-Chog Pel Hotel

9. Field Trip

Kindly bring walking shoes and a light but warm jacket for a field trip /visit in the forest (adventure walk) as the areas we will visit are cooler. More details for the field trip will be provided on site.

10. Useful tips

Smoking is prohibited in public places and the sale of cigarettes is banned throughout the country. For smokers, cigarettes can be allowed to be imported for personal consumption with declaration at Customs at the Paro International with a payment of 200% import duty based on the receipt of the cigarette. If anyone is intending to import cigarette for personal consumption, please ensure that you have a receipt of the cigarette that you are importing for taxation purposes. Lastly, ensure that you retain the receipt of the payment of the tax.

11. Payment of the Daily Subsistence Allowances (DSA)

The residual DSA will be paid to the sponsored participants starting on the first day of the meeting.

12. Official language in Thimpu, Bhutan

The official language of the country is Dzongkhag. English is commonly spoken in Bhutan.

13. Weather and time zone information



The month of October in Bhutan is Autumn, and it is generally expected to have less rain and clear skies. The temperature during October is expected to be from 10 to 21 degrees Celsius.

Current weather conditions in the area can be found at:
<http://www.timeanddate.com/weather/bhutan/thimphu>.

14. Electricity

The standard voltage is 230 V in Bhutan. The standard frequency is 50 Hz. The power sockets that are used in Bhutan are shown below:



15. Currency



The currency of Bhutan is Ngultrum (Nu). The current exchange rate is US \$1.00 = Nu. 66.88 (source www.xe.com, rates are subject to change). You can exchange money either in the airport or in the hotel.

16. Disclaimer

The CBD Secretariat disclaims all responsibilities for medical, accident and travel insurances, for compensation for death or disability compensation, for loss of or damage to personal property and for any other losses that may be incurred during travel time or the period of participation. In this context, it is strongly recommended that participants will secure international medical, accident and travel insurances for the period of participation prior to departure.
