



Just Transition through Economic Diversification and Ecosystem-Based Development in India's Eastern Himalayas

1. Name of proposing Party or organization.

India Water Foundation

2. Brief description of the proposed study:

The technical paper Just Transition of the Workforce, and the Creation of Decent Work and Quality Jobs shows that documented just transition experience originates from advanced or fossil-fuel-exporting economies. However, the Eastern Himalayan states of India like Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh fill this gap by offering a record of structural transformation in a biodiversity-sensitive mountain context, directly responsive to paragraphs 207–208 of the Just Transition technical paper. The region's economy remained dependent on subsistence and shifting cultivation, marked by declining soil fertility, weak market linkages and limited diversification the very vulnerabilities associated with regions ill-prepared for structural change. Since then, several states have pursued a deliberate shift toward sustainable agriculture, most notably Sikkim, which began phasing out synthetic fertilizers and pesticides from 2003, launched the Sikkim Organic Mission and was declared India's first fully organic state in 2016. The state has since recorded rising farm incomes and improved development outcomes, illustrating the job transformation and improved-income dynamic described in paragraph 35. Parallel diversification is visible in the region's expanding portfolio of Geographical Indication-tagged products, including Assam's Muga silk, recognized as the world's only golden silk, and Nagaland's Bhut Jolokia, among the world's hottest chillies, alongside Assam's Judima rice wine and Manipur's Shaphee Lanphee textile. These function as the information-based, product-differentiation instruments referenced in paragraph 81(e), strengthening incomes while formalizing indigenous knowledge systems. This diversification coincides with above-average regional growth: the compound annual growth rate of Gross State Domestic Product across the north-eastern states reached roughly 8.17% between FY2015 and FY2022, with recent assessments indicating that regional growth exceeds the national average, aided by expanding connectivity and agri-horticultural value chains. Social inclusion outcomes



have advanced alongside these economic shifts. Women-led self-help groups, particularly in Meghalaya's matrilineal Khasi and Garo communities, have expanded livelihoods in weaving, horticulture, apiculture and allied micro-enterprises. Education outcomes have also kept pace: Mizoram was recently declared a fully literate state with a literacy rate of 98.2%, while Sikkim, Manipur and Mizoram are among India's more educationally developed states. Water security, long a constraint where springs sustain much of rural drinking-water supply, has increasingly been addressed through ecosystem-based adaptation. Sikkim and Meghalaya's spring rejuvenation and agroforestry initiatives have since contributed to an eight-state Himalayan Water Partnership, reflecting the public investment in ecosystem rehabilitation identified in paragraph 81(c) as a driver of resilience and employment. These gains are increasingly visible in development indicators. NITI Aayog's North Eastern Region District SDG Index recorded an increase in "front runner" districts from 62 to 85 % between its first and second editions, with every district in Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura attaining front-runner status. This case study would therefore offer the improved forum a positive, evidence-based model demonstrating that economic diversification, decent work creation, social inclusion and ecosystem-based adaptation can be mutually reinforcing in a developing-country mountain setting, directly supporting the analytical and capacity-building elements proposed in paragraph 209.

3. *United Nations region to be covered by the case study:*

Asia-Pacific;

4. *Country or countries to be covered by the case study*

India

5. *Area of the case study:*

Policy planning to implementation pathways ;Managing workforce transitions ;The design and implementation of economic diversification strategies ;Institutional arrangements surrounding impact assessment ;The identification of potential new sectors for diversification ;

6. *Expected duration for completion of the case study (in months):*



7. *Contribution of the submitting organization*

Technical inputs;Data;Authorship;

8. *Can the study be developed without financial support from the UNFCCC?*

No

9. *If no, please provide the estimated range of required financial support in USD (Please note that the UNFCCC is not a donor organization and has limited funding):*

1500000

10. *Please provide the status of any preliminary work undertaken that could serve as a basis for the study, including a link to any available reports, if available.*



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