

## The Outdoor Mountain Field Programme

The Registration for the Outdoor Mountain and Field Programme is now open / Closing date for registration: 6<sup>th</sup> of March 2012

We learn through experience.

**The Outdoor Mountain Field Programme**

Join us in our educational tours in the high mountains of the Eastern Himalayas  
Photo: Kachyo Lepcha, Acoustic Traditional

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**acoustic traditional**  
Mountains. Forests.

The Mountain Outdoor field programme (in the Singalila range/ Kanchanzonga bio-sphere reserve, Eastern Himalayas) is a unique way to directly engage with the mountain communities through stories and traditions of storytelling. Developed with a view to support the preservation of dying oral literature (especially in the form of storytelling), the programme provides a unique 7-day retreat in two of the most beautiful peaks of the Himalayan range namely (1) Sandakphu or “the Mountain of Poison Plants” which is also the highest peak (3,690 mts) in the



Singalila range in Darjeeling and (2) Dzongu in North Sikkim which is considered to be the aboriginal home of the disappearing Lepcha tribe and often considered a spiritual sanctuary for the people of the mountains.

While it undoubtedly is a *once in a life time* experience in terms of being around with the natural world and welcoming indigenous communities that have inhabited the region for thousands of years, the Programme is specific in its approach in terms of being able to encourage and support the survival of storytelling as a tradition in the communities, the loss of which can mean an extinction of their community history. The basic premise of the Programme is making certain forms of storytelling accessible and open to study in an environment where it is already relevant and in much need of preservation. As such, there are field based assignments, workshops and sessions – all in the open! Throughout the 7 days, you will be hiking, climbing, documenting, keeping a diary, doing community chores (from yak herding to fodder gathering) and interacting with the community storytellers, shamans and other members, apart from having fun).

Region and Communities in the programme:

- a. Sandakphu or 'the Mountain of Poison Plants': Being the highest peak in the Singalila range at a height of 3,690 meters, the communities in Sandakphu include a diverse mix of clans, tribes and aboriginal communities. The way to Sandakphu is scattered with tiny settlements and the communities vary from Sherpas to Rais to Tamangs. Sandakphu is a sacred place amidst the mountains and continues to attract travellers and trekkers from all across the globe. Due to its altitudinal barrier, it is often not considered in a tourist's itinerary.
- b. Dzongu or 'Strong (or sturdy or unmoving or immovable when translated in Lepcha)' Special Reserve: is considered a spiritual place by the Lepcha tribe. Considered to be their aboriginal home, Dzongu is perhaps one of the oldest Lepcha settlements in the Eastern Himalayan region. Inhabited mostly by Lepcha people, it is truly a sanctuary for story enthusiasts. It was declared a Special Reserve as early as 1960 while Sikkim was still a kingdom.

***Areas of focus:***

1. Mountain myths, legends and folktales; 2. Sacred Storytelling in the community (shamans referred to as *Jhankri, Fedongba, Poiba, Sakewa*, etc., depending on the tribe or community); 3. Shamans and their rituals, practices and spiritual wisdom; 4. Therapeutic and Spiritual Experiences; 5. Community-based engagement or direct learning from the community itself and 6. Personal engagement and experiences (such as fixing up someone's door, arranging lights for the cow shed, making presentation at a local school, etc)

We request you to read the complete details, before registering through the links provided for more information and how to register. The Programme, which includes a certificate of participation, will be conducted over a 7 day period between 20<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012. Please do note that the total number of participants for the Spring Programme is only 22 or less. As such, it is advised that you contact us early.



### **About Acoustic Traditional**

Acoustic Traditional is a registered non-profit organisation working towards the promotion and preservation of dying tribal oral myths, legends and traditions of storytelling across the various indigenous (specifically from mountain and forests) communities of India. Based in Bangalore, it conducts a yearly festival, the only existing platform in the country for tribal storytellers, across various venues with a view to bring together disappearing storytellers. At present it is working in the Eastern Himalayan region to document Kiranti myths or oral mundums which continue to be practiced by shamans (declining in numbers) of various clans and tribes. It also conducts various youth related projects and outreach activities. Please read more at [www.acoustictraditional.org](http://www.acoustictraditional.org)

For more, please do contact our Outdoor Mountain Field Programme Coordinator, Abhishek Pradhan at +91 98860 27733 / 080 6597 1082 or email [acoustic.traditional@gmail.com](mailto:acoustic.traditional@gmail.com)  
URL: [www.acoustictraditional.org](http://www.acoustictraditional.org)

For other announcements, workshop and project related topics, please visit our website.