

**Leh Initiative on Seabuckthorn**  
**by**  
**Shri Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Environment &  
Forests and Shri M. Pallam Raju, Minister of State for Defence, Government of  
India**  
**at**  
**Leh, Jammu & Kashmir**

In view of proven high potential of **seabuckthorn** in environmental conservation, health protection and economic augmenting the economy of Himalayan States, we make the following declaration:

1. Government of India recognise the potential of **seabuckthorn** in combating global warming, environmental conservation of high altitude areas of Indian Himalayan region, for health care and poverty alleviation and declare **seabuckthorn** as a priority species for afforestation and cultivation on the marginal lands of Forest Department and in the Himalayan region adjoining border areas.
2. A pilot project on **development of value chain on seabuckthorn** at an initial cost of Rs 25 crore will be taken up during the current financial year for further research, extension, technology intervention and establishment of a **National Initiative on Seabuckthorn** under the **Green India Mission**, one of the important Missions of the **National Action Plan on Climate Change**. A National Consortium will be constituted for implementation of the objective of 1 million hectares of area under seabuckthorn by 2020
3. Ministry of Environment & Forests will act as a nodal Ministry for National Seabuckthorn Development and will inter alia provide resources to steer the Initiative.
4. Defence Institute of High Altitude Research (DIHAR), Leh will be the nodal laboratory for R&D activities on seabuckthorn.
5. MoEF will facilitate extension, conservation and utilization of this natural resource base for the economic, social and environmental benefits to the region.
6. MoEF and MoD will facilitate seeding of seabuckthorn wherever feasible especially river banks and hill slopes.
7. Other Ministries, S&T Departments and Councils, wherever relevant, will be integrated into the Initiative.
8. Public-private partnership would be welcome to strengthen the programs in the Initiative.
9. To begin with, the Initiative will focus on Leh and Kargil areas of Jammu & Kashmir; Lahaul-Spiti and Kinnaur areas of Himachal Pradesh and Chamoli areas of Uttarakhand.
10. The Initiative will build partnerships with major seabuckthorn growing countries of the world, namely, China, Mongolia, Russia and Pakistan. On matters of processing the produce the Initiative will foster partnerships with countries like Germany and Finland.