

# Himachal to become carbon neutral by 2020: Dhumal

Sujay Mehdudia

**NEW DELHI:** Taking yet another step towards sustainable development of environment, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Prem Kumar Dhumal on Thursday announced that the State would be the first in the country to become carbon neutral by 2020 by undertaking carbon smart growth.

“The carbon footprint per capita in Himachal Pradesh has been assessed at 1.4 tonne per capita in comparison to national average of 1.57 tonnes per capita,” Mr. Dhumal said addressing the 12th Delhi Sustainable De-

velopment Summit in the Capital.

The summit with the theme “Protecting the Global Commons: 20 years Post Rio” has been organised by The Energy and Resource Institute (TERI) headed by noted environmentalist R. K. Pachauri.

Spelling out major initiatives taken for betterment of environment, he said the State Government has signed an agreement with the World Bank for harnessing carbon credits to generate revenue amounting to Rs. 20 crore for 20 years under “Bio-Carbon Projects” in 177 gram panchayats in 10

districts.

He said the State Government had created an “Environment Fund” through voluntary contribution from individuals and organisations for environment protection and stressed the need for more incentives and resources for financing mitigation and adaption strategies.

As per the exercise to cut down carbon emission, he said the government departments have been asked to carry out their energy and environment audits and introspect on action and policies for mitigation and adaption measures.