

Lincoln University

**Dr Pema Gyamtsho**

**Lincoln Alumni International Medal**

**2018**

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Former Minister for Agriculture, Forests and Environment in the first democratically elected government of Bhutan, Dr Pema Gyamtsho, is the recipient of the 2018 Lincoln Alumni International Medal.

He was also the minister-in-charge of National Environment Commission and Chairman of the Bhutan Trust Fund for Environment and Conservation (BT FEC), one of the first and most successful environmental trusts in the world.

He is currently the Opposition Leader in Bhutan's National Assembly since 2013, after five years in Government, and is also the Second Party President of Druk Phuensum Tshogpa (Bhutan Peace and Prosperity Party: DPT).

Dr Gyamtsho completed a Master of Agricultural Science degree in the Plant Science Department at Lincoln University, followed by a PhD from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, Switzerland. His career has drawn upon his agricultural science background and focused on sustainable development, closely aligned to the aims and interests of Lincoln University.

Dr Gyamtsho has over 30 years of experience in rural development, planning, project management, and research and is a national leader contributing to his country's economy and society. As Minister for Agriculture, Forests and Environment, he spearheaded the country's successful rural poverty alleviation programme through construction of access roads, formation of farmers' cooperatives, farm mechanisation and water management. Rural poverty levels were reduced from 31% to 16% within a span of five years.

In 2008, through his initiative, Bhutan initiated its largest national park, the Wangchuck Centennial Park, covering an area of 4,900 sq.km. At the global level, he declared Bhutan's pledge to remain a carbon neutral country for all times and its aspiration to gradually move towards a fully organic farming system as part of the country's efforts to combat climate change.

Dr. Gyamtsho was also a signatory to the successful global tiger population recovery programme and was the driving force behind the commitment from the 13 tiger range countries reflected in "The Thimphu Affirmative Nine-Point Action Agenda."

After returning from Lincoln in 1990, Dr. Gyamtsho worked in various capacities with the ministry of agriculture and forests in Bhutan. He has been behind the development of many policies and institutions related to the renewable natural resources sector, and a member of many bodies, including the Planning Commission, Sustainable Development Secretariat, Centre of Bhutan Studies, Forestry Development Corporation Board and Founding Co-Chairman of Bhutan Water Partnership.

Prior to joining politics in 2008, Dr. Gyamtsho worked as Deputy Resident Coordinator of Helvetas, a Swiss Association for International Cooperation, in Bhutan, which aims to collaborate in programmes in developing countries to strengthen local structures and sustainable development, and to promote human rights.

Between 2003 and 2006, he served at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Nepal, as the head of its policy and partnership division and as a natural resources management policy specialist. While working there, he travelled extensively across the

Hindu Kush-Himalayan region building institutional networks and promoting community based management of natural resources. He also contributed in the planning and implementation of a very successful pasture ecosystem management programme in Mongolia. ICIMOD is a regional knowledge development and learning centre serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan.

Dr Gyamtsho has made an outstanding contribution to the development of Bhutan and brought credit to Lincoln University.

**Lincoln University is delighted to award him the Lincoln Alumni International Medal for 2018.**