

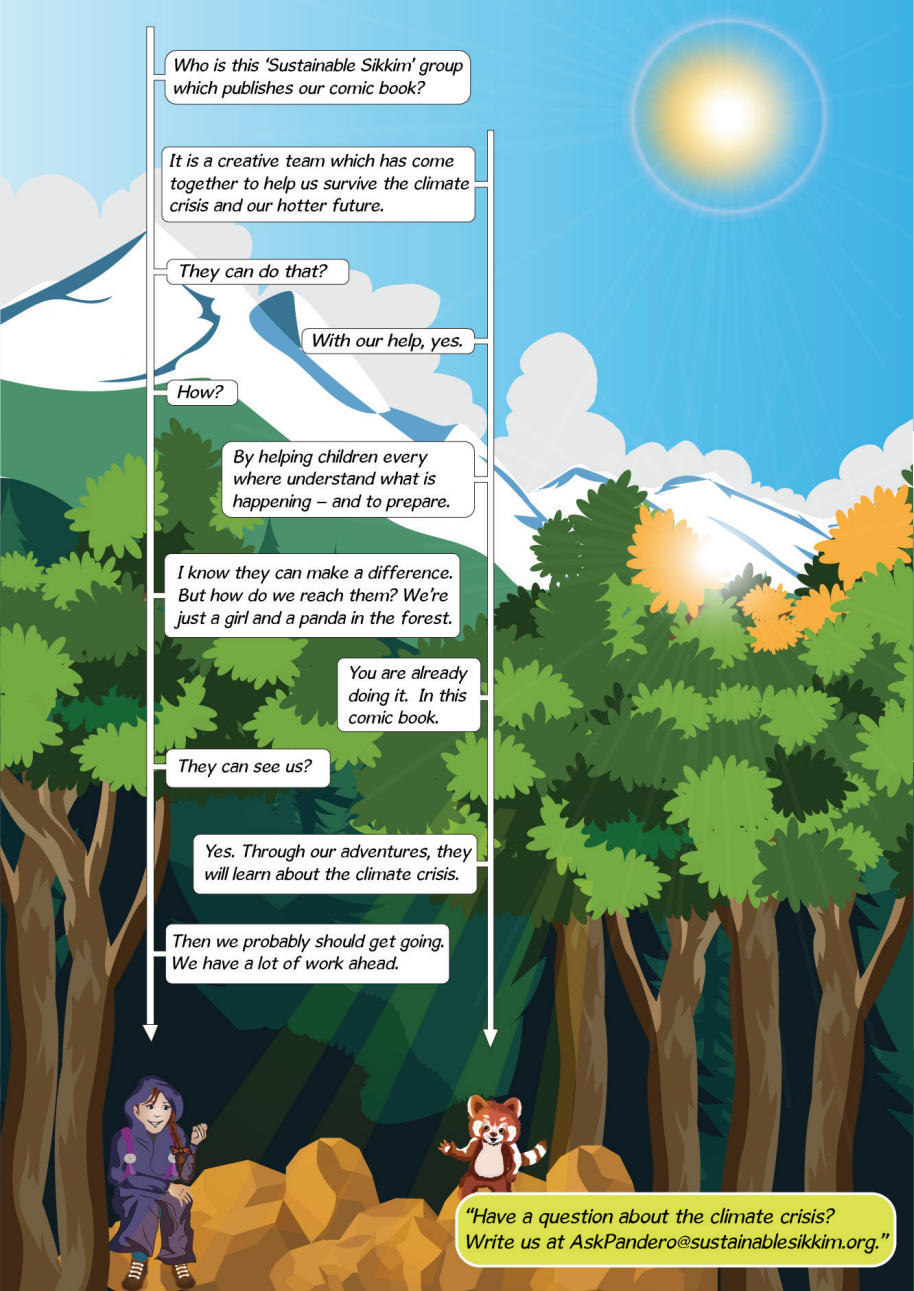
JOURNEY TO NEW KALAPA

PREMIERE ISSUE
JANUARY 2020

AN
ADVENTURE
IN
THE AGE OF THE
CLIMATE
CRISIS

**HURRY
GET IT NOW**





Who is this 'Sustainable Sikkim' group which publishes our comic book?

It is a creative team which has come together to help us survive the climate crisis and our hotter future.

They can do that?

With our help, yes.

How?

By helping children everywhere understand what is happening – and to prepare.

I know they can make a difference. But how do we reach them? We're just a girl and a panda in the forest.

You are already doing it. In this comic book.

They can see us?

Yes. Through our adventures, they will learn about the climate crisis.

Then we probably should get going. We have a lot of work ahead.



"Have a question about the climate crisis?
Write us at AskPandro@sustainablesikkim.org."

JOURNEY TO NEW KALAPA



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CHARACTERS AND ILLUSTRATIONS : UGEN LEPCHA

RESEARCHER : JUNU P. LEPCHA AND PASSANG DEM BHUTIA

Journey to New Kalapa, Vol. 1, Issue 1, published in January 2020, is copyright 2020 by SustainableSikkim.org and Climate Survival Solutions, Inc. PBC. It is created, printed, and published monthly by the Sustainable Sikkim team in Gangtok, Sikkim, India. If you are interested in a subscription, please visit <https://www.journeytonewkalapa.in/subscriptions>.

SOMEWHERE IN THE MOUNTAIN TRAILS NEAR GANGTOK



THE SUN PEEKS OUT AMONG DARKENING CLOUDS...

A 10 YEAR OLD GIRL IS HIKING, FEELS A RAINDROP AND LOOKS UP



IN THE DISTANCE, A SMALL ANIMAL RESTS IN THE TREES...

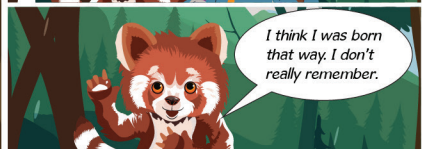
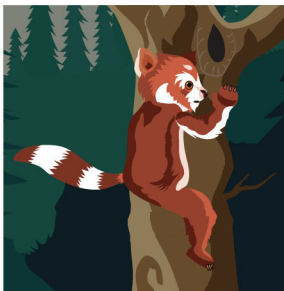
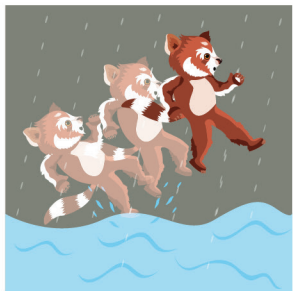


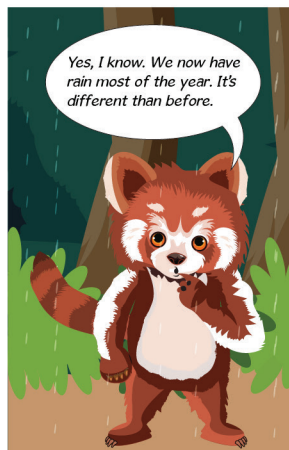



FLASHFLOOD









A vibrant illustration of a forest scene. In the foreground, a young girl with brown hair in a purple hooded robe stands on a rock, looking towards a raccoon. The raccoon is brown and white, standing on its hind legs. The background is filled with tall, brown trees and lush green foliage. A large white speech bubble frame is positioned in the center, containing a conversation about climate change.

Long ago, before what everybody calls the 'digital age'—

You mean with smartphones and computers?

Yes. And even before that, before everybody was driving cars, burning gas and oil for heat and power; and even before there was a lot of manufacturing—

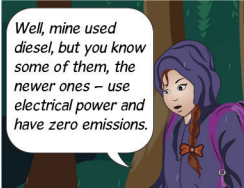
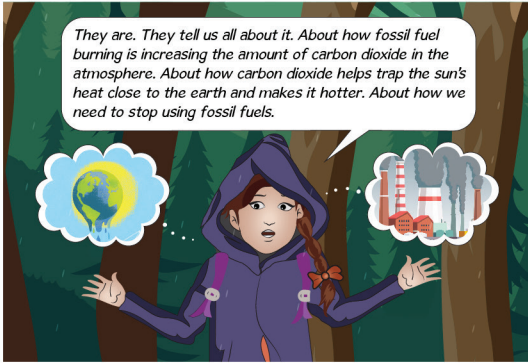
Yes?


There were a lot less of what we now call greenhouse gas emissions.

I know about that. They teach a little about it in school.

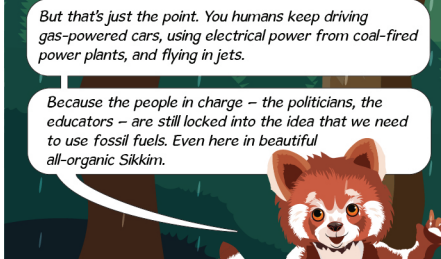
The school should teach more. Especially in the era of climate crisis.

I think that's changing. Everybody knows it is a problem.






I don't make the laws, you know.




But that's just the point. You humans keep driving gas-powered cars, using electrical power from coal-fired power plants, and flying in jets.

Because the people in charge – the politicians, the educators – are still locked into the idea that we need to use fossil fuels. Even here in beautiful all-organic Sikkim.




So what does this have to do with the flash flood you just rode down from the mountains?

Because there is too much carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, it's so hot even the Himalayan glaciers are melting.

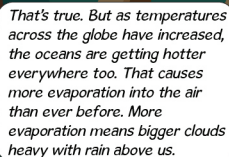


The Himalayas? I didn't know that –

As they melt, more water is flowing into the lakes, rivers and waterways north of us here. It's coming into China, Tibet, Nepal and even our state of Sikkim.



That would explain flooding, but not flash flooding.




That's true. But as temperatures across the globe have increased, the oceans are getting hotter everywhere too. That causes more evaporation into the air than ever before. More evaporation means bigger clouds heavy with rain above us.




And?


The rains which fall from those clouds are – right now at least – are coming down on lakes, riverbeds and land which are themselves already very full from the himalayan melting. So when a big rainstorm comes along –




And they are coming more often now. We never used to have rains like this extending into September, like right now. The monsoons were over by mid-August.



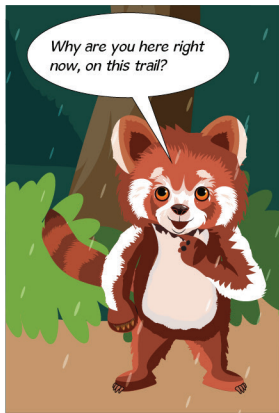
Those rains – much heavier and more sudden than in the past –



They cause flash floods.



Yes. And a lot of other kinds of extreme weather elsewhere. Like typhoon which now come in what is called "Category 6", with sustained winds of –





That's enough.

That's enough...
what?



I think that is
enough lecturing
to depress me.

I understand.



I do have one question. If flash floods are such a terrible sign for what we all have done to the planet, how can you do what you were doing when I first saw you – just ride it down the mountainside like a whitewater rafter – and laugh?



It is important to find joy in little things, so that you don't stay depressed and angry from the bad things.



Because?

Because this is the
"New Normal", as I said
before. You have to get
used to it.



We have to get used to it?

I'm afraid so.
We can't stop
global heating or
the horrible things
which are about
to happen from
happening.



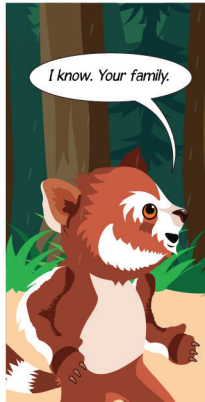
Even if we stop using
fossil fuels altogether?

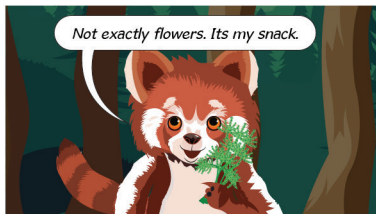


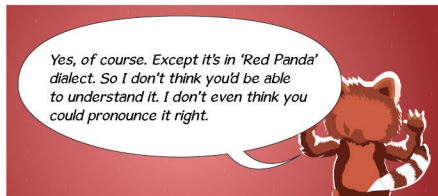


While this is all very wonderful, you do know I have to get home sometimes. Before dark.

I know. Your family.











I did. He was the one who told me so much about the climate crisis. I wouldn't have known that much without him.



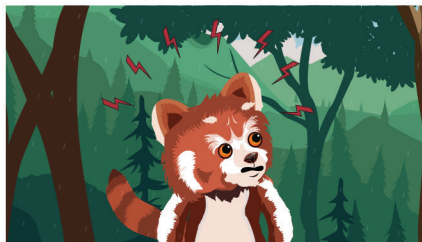
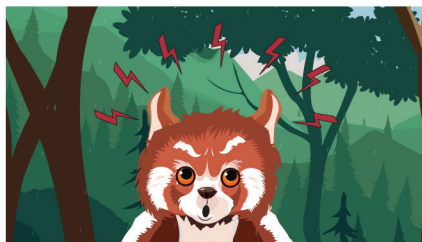
You wouldn't?



In case you haven't noticed, except for these mountains – and the forests of Sikkim – we red pandas don't get out much.



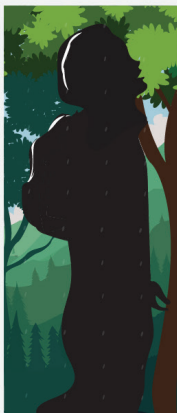
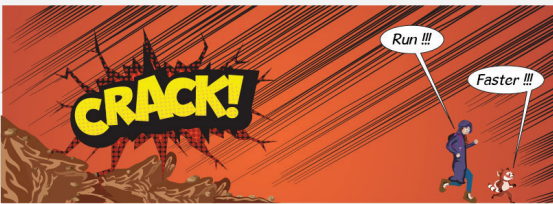
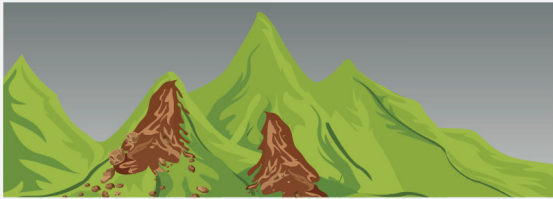
Ha! Sorry, I'm a little slow sometimes. Listen, we should probably get back soon. I'm sure the flash flood has passed now. And I do need to go back to my family. I won't forget you –



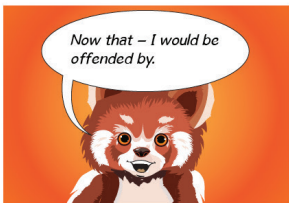
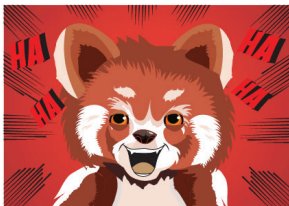
We have another problem.

What's that?

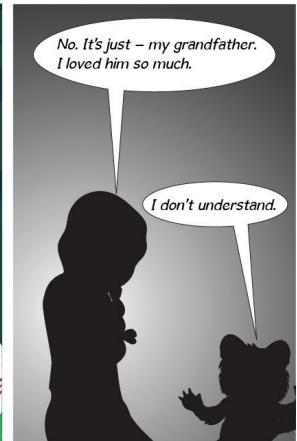
Something else that comes with heavy rains. Landslides.















He was my father's father. I called him Aajyo.


And – he liked hiking?




It was a lot more than that. He was a "bongthing". Do you know that term?



It means a combination of shaman and healer and priest, all in one.

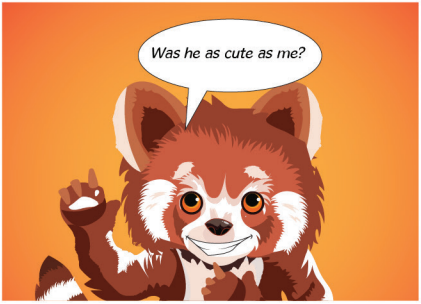


I've heard the word, once from people talking here in the woods. But I don't know what it means.




That's pretty powerful mix. I think I can guess how that brought him to the forests.

He knew so much about the natural world. Maybe like you.



Was he as cute as me?



Not as much hair. And none of it was red.



Was that okay – my petting you?

Except that I'm not exactly a pet.



Yes. I didn't mean –

It's fine. I'm glad you're calming down a little.



I guess I am. Even about this climate crisis thing.

What do you mean?



Just listening to you – and maybe also remembering Grandpa and some of what he taught me – I guess I'm realizing that this 'New Normal' does not have to be something to fear.

That's probably not entirely true. Global heating is going to bring some very bad things to this planet.



I get that. What I'm saying is that nature is not really angry at us. Thought maybe it should be.

It's just reaching a new state of equilibrium. At least I think that's what they call it in school.



That is a remarkable thing to understand, especially at your age.



You are helping, I guess.



Can you tell me more about your grandfather?

Aajyo used to take me to the forests and to the wildlife preserves...



He taught me about the many medicinal plants here, once most don't even know grow here and with healing powers even fewer understand...



He also used to take me for berry picking...



We used to stop to drink water directly from the streams too. But that's not safe anymore.

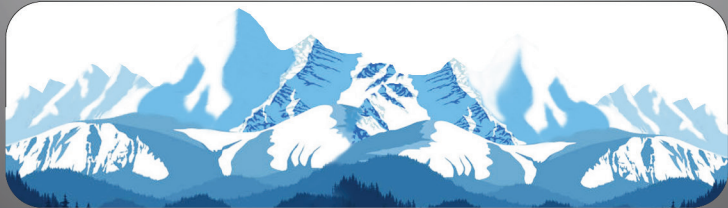
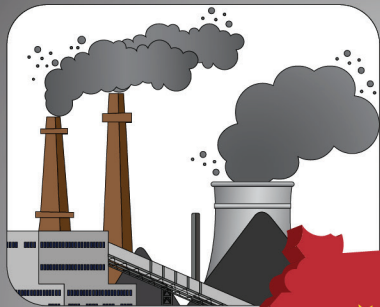


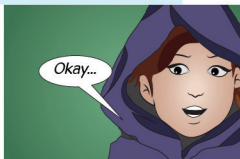
That's true. Some toxins from the Himalayan glaciers have made it down here.

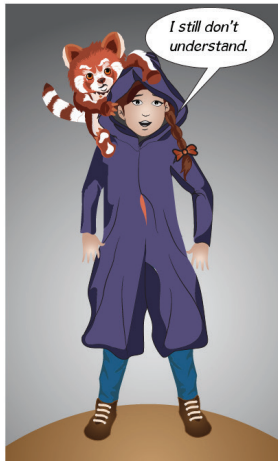
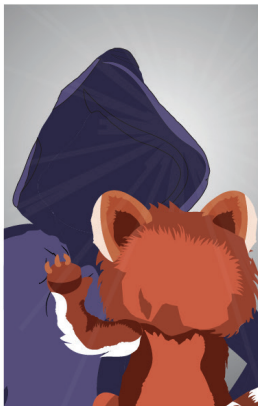


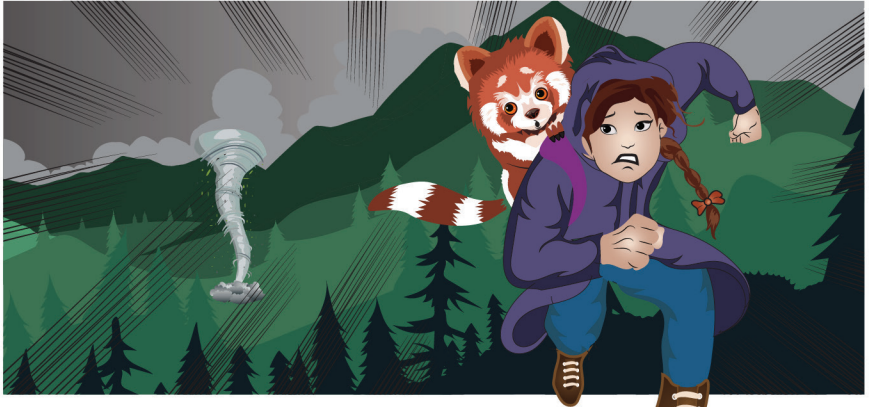
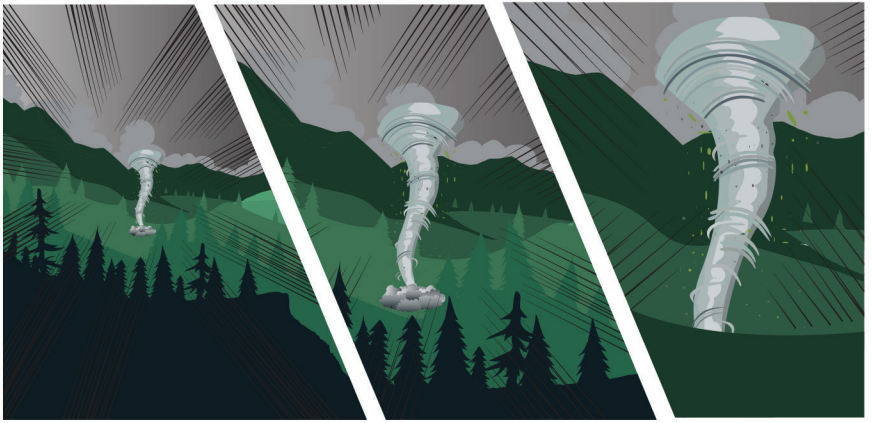
Toxins?

Yes. The many decades of coal-fired power plant operations in China dumped a lot of bad things into the air. Some of those bad things made their way back down onto the Himalayas.



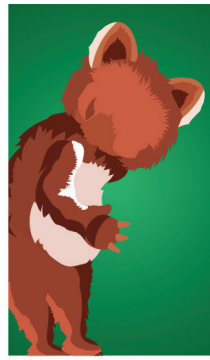
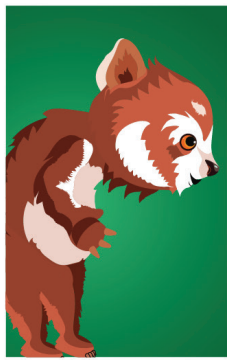


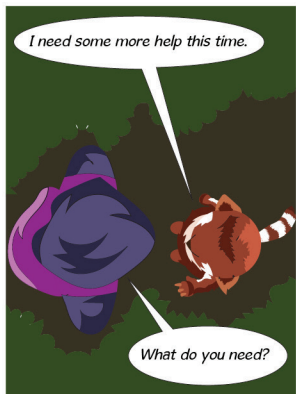
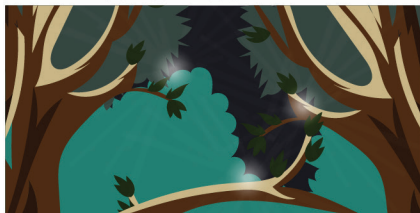












I need some more help this time.

What do you need?



Can you push those branches ahead of you – straight ahead – apart and go forward about four meters?



Yes, but I don't understand.



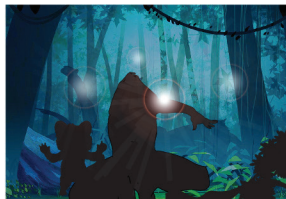
Please. Trust me. After all, I'm just a little red panda. What trouble could I get you into?



I think you are a bit more than 'just a little red panda'.

And you, dear Karma, are a bit more than just a ten-year-old girl.

Please. Push on ahead.



**DON'T MISS
THE CONTINUING ADVENTURES
OF KARMA AND PANDERO**

**AS THEY LEARN MORE
OF
THE MARVELS OF NEW KALAPA**





**JOIN
OUR
HEROES**



**AS THEY FIGHT BACK AGAINST
THE EVIL FORCES OF I.G. FARGEN!**