

# Mainstreaming Mountains in The Climate Agenda: The Context of Mountain Initiative and Rio+20

## Purpose of the side event

This side event aims to sensitize member country delegations, development partners, scientific communities and mountain stakeholders by sharing knowledge, experience, and ongoing good practices with regard to the impacts of climate change on mountain



ecosystems and livelihoods of mountain people. The goal is to help develop consensus among mountain countries for taking immediate actions to address the lack of adequate mountain specific policies, finance, capacity, and technologies in the UNFCCC processes by mobilizing support and resources from the climate change negotiation processes for pursuing the agenda of sustainable and resilient mountain development much more vigorously and meaningfully.

## What is the Mountain Initiative (MI)?

The Government of Nepal launched the Mountain Initiative during COP15 in Copenhagen. It is a mechanism for building collective efforts towards a coordinated and common position on mountain issues. It aims to project the needs and concerns of the mountain countries at different global forums within a framework of global collaboration for addressing the Mountain Agenda.

## Why mountains matter?

Mountains provide key services and goods for humankind but they are more affected by the impacts of climate change compared to other regions. Mountain regions are also not adequately resourced to address the challenges that threaten the environment, development, and livelihoods. Mountains cover 27 per cent of the Earth's land surface, are home to 12 per cent of the world's population, provide freshwater to over half of humankind, store key resources such as biodiversity, minerals, rocks, timber, and the plant genetic resources of major food crops, and are major

destinations for tourism. Therefore, mountain countries need to collaborate with each other in achieving the goals of resilient and sustainable mountain development. This can be possible if all mountain countries have a strong common voice to ensure that the Mountain Agenda, under Chapter 3/Agenda 21 of Rio'92 as well as the Paras 210, 211 and 212 of the Rio+20 summits, are taken forward.

## How mountain issues can be addressed under the UNFCCC?

The IPCC Fourth Assessment Report (2007) recognizes the vulnerability of mountain areas from a climate change perspective. However, so far UNFCCC COPs and other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) have had negligible discussions on mountain issues. Article 4.8 of the UNFCCC says that countries with fragile ecosystems, including mountainous ecosystem, should also be prioritised for effective implementation of the convention. However, mountain countries did not figure in the priority list of both the Bali Action Plan and the Cancun Adaptation Framework.

## What are the expected outcomes of this side event?

The side event, besides sharing and discussing follow-up actions being taken to implement the Kathmandu Call for Action, plans to finalize global programs of work aimed at carrying out specific activities to share information, knowledge, and good practices. It also aims to identify regional focal points for the Mountain Initiative in different mountain regions and promote networking and partnerships. ICIMOD and the Mountain Partnership Secretariat also plan to share the output of the Mountain Day 2 at the side-event.





## What the Mountain Initiative plans to do?

- To provide a framework within which mountain countries and global and regional institutions working on mountains, can work together for greater recognition of the critical role of mountain ecosystems in the context of global climate change;
- To establish a common platform of mountain countries to influence the international negotiation process for the global mountain agenda;
- To derive maximum benefits from international instruments to address the adverse impacts of climate change being faced by the mountain countries across the world.



## How can we take the Mountain Initiative forward?

The Government of Nepal with support from different development partners and international organizations organized the first International Conference of Mountain Countries on Climate Change in Kathmandu in April, 2012. Ministers and representatives from more than 26 countries attending the meeting issued the Kathmandu Call for Action which, among others, reaffirmed 'the spirit of solidarity and cooperation among the mountain countries and countries with mountainous regions for addressing the common problems affecting all the mountainous regions, and for consolidating our common efforts to effectively integrate mountain issues into the global climate change and development agenda...' The side event is intended to strengthen this spirit into reality.

## Programme

Time	Activities	
20:15 - 20:30	Welcome and highlight of the programme, <i>MI and Kathmandu Call for Actions</i>	Mr. Keshab Bhattarai, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology (MoEST), Government of Nepal (GoN)
20:30 - 20:40	Proposed <i>MI Programme of Works</i>	Mr. Prakash Mathema, Joint-Secretary, MoEST, GoN
20:40 - 21:10 (4 min. each)	Brief Remarks on the proposed <i>MI Programme of Works</i> - Dr. Madhav Karki, DDG, ICIMOD - Dr. Dinesh Chandra Devkota, Former Vice-Chair, NPC, GoN - Mr. Krishna Gyawali, Secretary, GoN - Representative from different regions and development partners (tbd)	
21:10 - 21:45	Discussion and Way Forward	Moderator: Dr. Keshab Man Shakya, Hon. Minister, MoEST, Government of Nepal

**Date and Time:** 06 December 2012 (Thursday), 8.15 to 9.45 PM **Venue:** Side Event Room No. 1, UNFCCC, COP18

**Note:** The side event will be followed by dinner

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