



Permanent Mission of Nepal
to the United Nations
New York

ICIMOD

SIDE EVENT

Impacts of climate change on the mountains

Key findings of the *Hindu Kush Himalaya Assessment* report and lessons for sustainable mountain development

Venue: Conference Room 12, United Nations Headquarters
Date: 9 July 2019
Time: 18:30–20:00

Organizers: Permanent Mission of Nepal to the United Nations and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)



Background

Extending over 3,500 km from Afghanistan in the west to Myanmar in the east, the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) mountains are home to the world's highest peaks, rich biodiversity, unique cultures, and vast reserves of natural resources. A critically important global asset with vast ice fields outside the polar regions, this mountain range is also known as the Third Pole. ICIMOD's recent *Hindu Kush Himalaya Assessment* report presents a cautionary picture of the impact of climate change in the HKH region as it synthesizes various scientific studies. A first of its kind in its comprehensiveness and focus, the report provides an assessment of one of the world's most significant yet often overlooked mountain regions, exposing the fragility of not just the region but its ecosystems as a whole.

This side event is aimed at bringing together representatives from governments across the HKH and from other mountain regions around the world, as well as other stakeholders, to raise awareness about the key findings and recommendations of the report. Since the High-Level Political Forum under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) will review Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 on climate action as well, the *HKH Assessment* report presents a timely reminder about what the stakes are if climate change remains unchecked.

The event will deliberate on the following questions:

1. What is the significance of mountains in climate change conversations?
2. What are the key findings of the *HKH Assessment* report? What could be the way forward?
3. What urgent actions are needed at the national, regional, and global levels to achieve sustainable mountain development in general and SDG 13 in particular?

Deliberations from this side event will contribute to national, regional, and global efforts, including the UN Climate Action Summit and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP meeting in 2019 and other relevant platforms.

Programme

- Welcome remarks by HE Mr Amrit Bahadur Rai, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations
- Opening address by Hon Mr Puspa Raj Kadel, Vice Chairman of the National Planning Commission, Nepal
- Keynote address by Mr Luis Alfonso de Alba, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the 2019 Climate Action Summit
- A presentation by Dr David Molden, Director General, ICIMOD, on "Sustainable mountain development: Key messages from the *HKH Assessment* report"
- Interactive discussion facilitated by Mr Gyan Chandra Acharya, former UN Under-Secretary-General
- Remarks by representatives of member states (mountain countries, downstream countries, and development partners)
- Closing

The event will be webcast, live and on-demand, on the UN Web TV website (webtv.un.org)