

ICIMOD CHAMPIONS PACK

70th anniversary of the Everest ascent: Climbers, communities and scientists come together at the top of the world to call for humanity to save the mountain.

Overview

It is 70 years since Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay first scaled Everest. In that time, global temperature rises have put Everest and the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region in the danger zone. Glaciers are melting and retreating at an alarming rate, and based on current projections, two-thirds will disappear in the next 70 years.

The climate emergency is here and now for Everest and for the people and nature across the HKH. Extreme weather events, floods, drought, and food insecurity are already upending lives and devastating livelihoods throughout the region, as seen in the Pakistan floods last year.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development ([ICIMOD](#)), the leading institute dedicated to mountain communities and the environment, is calling on everyone that cares about the region to join forces and campaign to #SaveOurSnow.

To champion this campaign, please use this pack to speak out on the adverse impacts of climate change in the HKH. Refer to the key and wider messages when speaking to regional and international media, and share some of the suggested social posts and assets on your platforms and channels.

Call to action

SAVE OUR SNOW
#SaveOurSnow

We want **everyone** who cares about Everest and the region – from world leaders and climbers to local communities and scientists – to help us highlight the plight of the HKH by sharing stories and photographs from the mountains of the changes that have taken place through climate change.

From the top of the world, let's make sure we're heard. Choices made now will decide the future for billions. There's no time left - only if we act now can we save our snows and the societies and ecosystems they safeguard.

Key messages

1. Mount Everest is undergoing unprecedented and largely irreversible change, driven by global warming. The rise in global temperatures in the 70 years since the first ascent of Everest is jeopardising the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region that extends 3,500km across eight countries, from Afghanistan in the west to Myanmar in the east.
2. In the next 70 years, under current emission scenario, scientists project up to two-thirds of glaciers in the HKH will disappear. The region will see an increase in adverse impacts from climate change, including extreme weather events, natural hazards, water insecurity, biodiversity loss, food shortages, and rising poverty.
3. Climate change is already upending lives and devastating livelihoods across the HKH region. The floods in Pakistan last year killed 1,700 people, destroyed over 2 million homes, and left 20 million in need of humanitarian assistance.
4. The HKH is home to more than 240 million people, and nearly two billion more – a quarter of the world's population – depend on the water that flows from its mountains.
5. The fight against climate change is therefore critically important and requires urgent global action. ICIMOD, as the leading institute dedicated to mountain communities and the environment, is coordinating the first-ever report on snow and ice changes in the region which will serve as essential reading for decision-makers, practitioners, and the global community.

Additional messages

1. Mount Everest is undergoing unprecedented and largely irreversible change, driven by global warming. The climate impacts of carbon emissions in the 70 years since the first ascent of Everest is jeopardising the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region which extends 3,500km across eight countries, from Afghanistan in the west to Myanmar in the east.
 - The climate emergency is here and now for Mount Everest and for the people and nature across the HKH.
 - With elevation dependent warming causing mountains here to warm at twice the global average, 1.5°C is too hot for the HKH.
 - As scientists warn of the 1.5°C threshold being passed - at least temporarily - in the next five years, it is likely that temperatures in the HKH can on average be an additional 0.3°C higher.
 - Research shows that every increase in temperature matters for the fate of these glaciers and the snowpack.
 - Recent research also indicates that the rate of ice loss from Himalayan glaciers has surged to a level ten times greater than the average rate observed in previous centuries.
2. In the next 70 years, based on current projections, up to two-thirds of glaciers in the HKH region will disappear. The region will see an increase in impacts from climate change,

including extreme weather events, water insecurity, biodiversity loss, food shortages, and rising poverty.

- In addition to rapid glacier melting, the disastrous impacts of climate change for the HKH include the threat of glacial lake outburst flooding, changes in snowfall and snow cover and unpredictable rainfall patterns.
- A 1.5°C rise in global temperatures will increase the risk of extreme weather events, triggering flash floods, altering agriculture, and exacerbating existing vulnerabilities.
- Warming at 2°C will result in the loss of half the volume of the region's glaciers, destabilise Asia's river systems, and impact billions.

Everest specific

- Between 1994 and 2013, temperatures rose on average in the Everest region 0.044 degrees Celsius each year. <https://tc.copernicus.org/articles/9/1229/2015/tc-9-1229-2015.pdf>
 - On some glaciers around Everest as much as 100 metres of thinning has taken place in six decades, and the rate of thinning has nearly doubled since 2009.
 - Among them is the iconic Khumbu glacier, where much of the climbing to the summit of Everest occurs, which, with temperatures of just -3 degrees Celsius, is now precariously close to melting
3. Climate change is already upending lives and devastating livelihoods across the HKH region. The floods in Pakistan last year killed 1,700 people, destroyed over 2 million homes, and left 20 million in need of humanitarian assistance.
- Climate change is already wreaking havoc on people's lives and livelihoods, threatening communities and their ability to survive, and driving migration.
 - Mountain communities live at constant risk of landslides, avalanches, storms and floods, and disastrous events are increasing each year.
 - Floods in the HKH are responsible for 30% of death and injuries in the region, and 60% of human displacements.
 - Glacial Lake Outburst Floods are becoming more common as glaciers melt – putting millions at risk across the region, and 15 million at risk worldwide.
4. The Hindu Kush Himalaya is home to more than 240 million people, and nearly two billion more – a quarter of the world's population – depend on the water that flows from its mountains.
- But despite its global importance, the HKH remains one of the poorest and most neglected regions in the world and is disproportionately vulnerable to climate impacts.
 - About half the population in the HKH suffers from malnutrition and nearly one-third from food insecurity.
 - As a source of ten major Asian river systems, the HKH provides water and biodiversity to hundreds of millions – and the entire region is at risk.

- The fight against climate change is therefore critically important and requires urgent global action. ICIMOD, as the leading institute dedicated to mountain communities and the environment, is coordinating the first-ever report on snow and ice changes in the region, which will serve as essential reading for decision-makers, practitioners, and the global community.

Quotes from ICIMOD spokes people

Pema Gyamtsho, ICIMOD Director General, said: “Even before we’ve hit the 1.5 degree threshold of the Paris Agreement, the dangerous impacts of global warming are already being felt throughout the Hindu Kush Himalaya: in record-breaking heat waves, droughts, natural disasters, unpredictable snowfall and precipitous and largely irreversible glacial melt. We need urgent, global action to protect the lives and livelihoods of the 2 billion people in this region and to safeguard the countless, irreplaceable lifeforms that exist only here.”

Tenzing Chogyal Sherpa, ICIMOD glaciologist and grandson of Kancha Sherpa, the last remaining survivor of the first expedition says, “Those of us who study, live in or climb in the mountains are eyewitnesses to the terrifying speed of changes happening in our cryosphere – often caused by actions taken millions of miles away. We are calling on everyone who love these fragile places to raise their voice about the impacts of continued inaction on emissions reductions and to call for world leaders and businesses to speed up the transition to renewables to #SaveOurSnow.”

Social media


We invite you to lend your voice and show your support by updating your Facebook and LinkedIn cover photos. By doing so, you'll help us spread the word far and wide.



Let's make our profiles stand out and inspire others to join the cause!

Here's how you can get involved:

Update your Facebook and LinkedIn cover photos: Every cover photo change counts!

Share your passion through posts: Use one of our carefully crafted captions below to express your Social Media Posts

Social copy	Download link
<p> ATTENTION: The Hindu Kush Himalaya region is undergoing unprecedented and largely irreversible change, driven by global warming. Increased temperature is the main cause of higher glacier melt.</p> <p>If we do not take urgent action to #SaveOurSnow, two-thirds of glaciers in the region will disappear before the end of this century. There is no time left.</p>	<p>https://www.icimod.org/saveoursnow/raise-your-voice/</p>

<p>In the 70 years since Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay first scaled Everest, rising global temperatures have put the mountain in danger.</p> <p>In the next 70 years, two-thirds of glaciers on the region's mountains will disappear if we do not take urgent action to #SaveOurSnow</p>	<p>https://www.icimod.org/saveoursnow/raise-your-voice/</p>
<p>The climate emergency is here and now for Mount Everest and for the people and nature across the Hindu Kush Himalaya.</p> <p>The adverse impacts of climate change are already upending lives and devastating livelihoods across the region, as seen in the floods in Pakistan last year.</p> <p>We need urgent global action to #SaveOurSnow and ice before it's too late.</p>	<p>https://www.icimod.org/saveoursnow/raise-your-voice/</p>
<p> WARNING: Breaching the 1.5 degrees threshold enshrined in the Paris Agreement will unleash catastrophe across the Hindu Kush Himalayas: jeopardising the lives and livelihoods of 240 million people in the mountains and 2 billion more people downstream.</p> <p>We need leaders to decarbonise now to #SaveOurSnow and ice.</p>	<p>https://www.icimod.org/saveoursnow/raise-your-voice/</p>
<p> CALL TO ACTION</p> <p>The Hindu Kush Himalaya is home to the world's highest peaks and contains the largest volume of ice on earth after the polar regions. However, despite servicing a quarter of the world's population, the impacts of climate change on the region are under-documented.</p> <p>ICIMOD, the leading institute dedicated to mountain communities and the environment, is calling on everyone who cares about the region to highlight the impacts of climate change by sharing your stories and photographs from the mountains over the years.</p> <p>From the top of the world, let's make sure we're heard.</p>	<p>https://www.icimod.org/saveoursnow/raise-your-voice/</p>

Spread the word through stories: Share your dedication with your followers on Instagram stories. Upload a photo or video showcasing your support for the cause, tag ICIMOD, and use the hashtag #SaveOurSnow. Together, we'll amplify our message and inspire action!

Join us in this vital campaign to safeguard our snow and its incredible value to our environment. Let's create a movement that echoes across the globe. Visit [www.icimod.org/saveoursnow] to learn more and be part of the solution.

Together, we can protect our snow-covered landscapes and ensure a sustainable future for all. Join the #SaveOurSnow movement today!

Note: By participating in this campaign, you grant ICIMOD permission to share your posts, stories, and images related to the #SaveOurSnow campaign on their social media platforms and website.

More information

- [The Hindu Kush Himalaya Assessment: Mountains, Climate Change, Sustainability and People](#) (ICIMOD, 2019)

About ICIMOD

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development is an intergovernmental knowledge centre for the Hindu Kush Himalaya for the people and ecosystems of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan. Our vision is for a greener, more inclusive and climate resilient Hindu Kush Himalaya.

Website: <https://www.icimod.org/>

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