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Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Environment
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Ref. No. 41

29 October 2026

The President of the Thirty-first Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP31),
The Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Subject: Proposal for the Inclusion of a Supplementary Provisional Agenda Item at COP31 entitled "1.5°C Warming in Mountains"

Excellencies,

On behalf of the Government of Nepal and the Royal Government of Bhutan, I have the honour to submit, in accordance with Rule 12 of the draft Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties, a proposal for the inclusion of a supplementary provisional agenda item entitled **"1.5°C Warming in Mountains"** at the thirty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP31), to be held in Antalya, Türkiye, from 9 to 20 November 2026.

Mountain ecosystems, particularly those of the Hindu-Kush Himalaya and other high-mountain regions, are warming rapidly and face mounting risks of glacier loss, water insecurity, biodiversity loss, extreme weather events and irreversible damage to fragile ecosystems. These impacts endanger the lives and livelihoods of mountain communities and carry far-reaching consequences for the water, food, energy and economic security of billions of people living downstream. The growing frequency and severity of climate-induced disasters further underscore the urgent need for enhanced adaptation, strengthened transboundary cooperation, and equitable access to climate finance and support for loss and damage.

This proposal is grounded in the obligations and principles of the Convention, in particular its Preamble and Article 4.8, and draws upon the relevant assessments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the outcomes of recent UNFCCC negotiations, and the political momentum generated by the Sagarmatha Sambaad and its Sagarmatha Call for Action of May 2025. It further seeks to advance the outcomes of COP30 and of the Dialogue on Mountains and Climate Change convened on 12 June 2026 during SB64.

Through this agenda item, Nepal and Bhutan respectfully propose that COP31 consider:

i. advancing scientific understanding of the impacts and risks of 1.5°C warming and of potential temperature overshoot in mountain regions;
ii. institutionalising an annual high-level dialogue on mountains and climate change;
iii. initiating a process towards a dedicated UNFCCC Work Programme on Mountain Ecosystems; and
iv. integrating mountain-specific priorities into adaptation frameworks, climate finance arrangements and loss and damage mechanisms.

I believe that a dedicated agenda item will strengthen the collective response of the international community to mountain-related climate risks, foster solidarity between upstream and downstream countries, and advance the protection of mountain ecosystems and the communities that depend upon them. Nepal and Bhutan stand ready to engage constructively and in a spirit of consultation with all Parties, the Presidency and the Secretariat in this regard.

I therefore respectfully request the inclusion of **"1.5°C Warming in Mountains"** in the supplementary provisional agenda of COP31, enclosed herewith, for the consideration of the Parties.

Please accept, Excellencies, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Gita Chaudhary
Minister

Enclosure: Supplementary Provisional Agenda Item at COP31 entitled "1.5°C Warming in Mountains".

Submission by the Government of Nepal and the Royal Kingdom of Bhutan an Agenda Item for COP 31: "1.5°C warming in Mountains"

28 October, 2026

Dear COP President, incoming COP President and Executive Secretary

In accordance with Rule 12 of the draft Rules of Procedure of the UNFCCC, on behalf of Bhutan, Nepal and, Nepal submits this proposal for the inclusion in the supplementary provisional agenda of the thirty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP31) of a new agenda item entitled:

"1.5°C warming in Mountains"

1. **Background: Rationale and Mandate under the Convention:** This submission builds upon the foundational legal provisions of the UNFCCC Preamble and Article 4.8, and the growing multilateral consensus recognized during recent UN climate proceedings.

1.1. Convention: The Preamble and Article 4.8 of the UNFCCC mandate Parties to give full consideration to the specific needs and vulnerabilities arising from the adverse effects of climate change on countries with areas with fragile ecosystems including mountain ecosystems.

1.2. Alignment with Global Frameworks: Sustainable Mountain Development is a central agenda item to achieving Chapter 13 of Agenda 21, UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/71/234, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. The United Nations General Assembly declared 2025 as the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation (IYGP 2025) and 2025-2-35 as the international decade to glacier conservation.

1.3. Scientific Urgency: The latest science, including the IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (SROCC) and the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6), underscore the urgency of limiting warming and avoiding overshoot of 1.5°C. Mountain regions, particularly the Hindu Kish Himalayan and other high mountains region, are warming rapidly, with severe consequences for glaciers, water security, food security, energy security and mountain ecosystems at large. Rising temperatures are increasing the risk of irreversible damage, pushing adaptation beyond its limits and threatening mountain communities, existential risks to local populations, infrastructure, and regional economies. Protecting mountains is therefore a matter of scientific urgency, with consequences extending far beyond mountain regions.

1.4. Sagarmatha Sambaad (May 2025): Nepal organized a global dialogue called Sagarmatha Sambaad under overarching theme **climate change, mountains and the future of humanity** in May 2025 and adopted **'Sagarmatha Call for Action'**. This summit generated broad political consensus across Asia-Pacific and global partners on the necessity of establishing a formal, high-level mountain work programme, dedicated COP agenda item at the conclusion.

2. Global Significance of Mountain Ecosystems

2.1. Water Towers of the World: Mountain ecosystems are perennial source for major river systems" clean water and fresh air, over 2 billion people benefited in the downstream in Asia and beyond. These river systems are playing vital role to drive water and energy security, food security and health security from mountains to the sea, leading to climate regulations and maintaining both human and natural systems.

2.2. Biodiversity and Cultural Heritage: Mountains cover nearly a quarter of the Earth's surface, host 15 percent of the global human population, and contain approximately 50 percent of global biodiversity hotspots. They sustain indigenous cultures, unique languages, and traditional adaptation practices.

2.3. Upstream–Downstream Interdependence: Changes in high-altitude snowpack, glaciers, and permafrost have significant implications for downstream water, food, and energy security. Strengthening transboundary cooperation and coordinated disaster risk reduction, including early warning system and data sharing, is therefore essential to enhance climate resilience and reduce shared risks. Effective protection and sustainable management of upstream ecosystems contribute to downstream water quality, air quality, and hydrological stability, while inadequate ecosystem management may exacerbate the risks of floods and other water-related disasters in downstream areas.

3. Escalating Vulnerability, Loss, and Damage in the mountains

Nepal's recent experience in Bhote Koshi flash flood illustrates the severe loss and damage suffered by mountainous developing countries as global temperatures breach critical thresholds. Climate-induced disasters across the Hindukush Himalaya (HKH) Region demonstrates the growing vulnerability of mountain communities, ecosystems, and infrastructure to extreme weather events and cryosphere-related hazards. Events in Nepal for example Melamchi (2021), Kathmandu and Thame (2024), Ilam (2025), and the Bhote Koshi area (2026) illustrate the potentially devastating consequences of floods, landslides, glacial and snow-related hazards, and extreme precipitation. Similar catastrophe also experienced in Chameli of India (2021) and Pakistan (2022). These events have resulted in loss of life and livelihoods, damage to homes and critical infrastructure, disruption of water, food and energy systems, and play a critical negative role to degradation of fragile mountain ecosystems. The scale of these losses underscores the urgent need for strengthened climate adaptation, transboundary cooperation, risk-informed development, and equitable access to loss-and-damage finance to address both economic and non-economic impacts, particularly for vulnerable mountain communities whose losses often exceed their capacity to recover. As per the National Disaster Risks Reduction and Management Authority, Nepal the Bhote Koshi catastrophe damaged around 2.7 billion USD properties while the country needs 4.7 billion USD which is equivalent to 10% of the country GDP.

4. Political Momentum and Justification for COP 31 Action

4.1. Since the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, mountain issues have evolved from a recognised area of climate vulnerability to a subject of dedicated scientific discussions and formal intergovernmental dialogue.

4.2. **1992 – UNFCCC adopted:** Article 4.8 (g) explicitly recognised developing countries with fragile ecosystems, including mountainous ecosystems, as having

specific needs and concerns requiring consideration, including in relation to finance, insurance and technology transfer. This established the legal foundation for the mountain agenda.

4.3. **2006 – Nairobi Work Programme:** COP12 established the Nairobi Work Programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, creating a mechanism for addressing adaptation knowledge gaps. Mountain ecosystems subsequently became one of its thematic areas.

4.4. **2015 – Paris Agreement:** The Paris Agreement strengthened the global framework for mitigation, adaptation and support, providing mountain countries with mechanisms to address climate risks through NDCs, adaptation planning and international cooperation. However, no dedicated process addresses mountain-specific risks.

4.5. **2019 – IPCC science:** The IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (SROCC) significantly strengthened the scientific understanding of glacier retreat, changing mountain water systems and associated risks. Its findings were discussed at an SBSTA–IPCC special event during COP25.

4.6. **2023 – COP28, Dubai:** The first Global Stocktake outcome explicitly recognised mountains and requested an expert dialogue on mountains and climate change at SBSTA60. The Nairobi Work Programme also held its 16th Focal Point Forum on adaptation knowledge gaps in mountains, high-latitude areas and the cryosphere.

4.7. **2024 – SBSTA60, Bonn:** On 5 June, the UNFCCC convened its first dedicated Expert Dialogue on Mountains and Climate Change. Discussions covered scientific risks, adaptation, transboundary impacts, finance and resilience, and highlighted the need for sustained attention within the UNFCCC.

4.8. **2024 – COP29, Baku:** Following Andorra's ministerial initiative at COP 27 and Nepal's High-Level Roundtable ("Call of the Mountains") at COP 28, COP decisions explicitly recognized mountain ecosystems as critical areas for integrated response. Mountain countries advanced a High-Level Dialogue on mainstreaming mountains within the UNFCCC. A political Declaration on Climate Change, Mountains and Glaciers was also presented, calling for stronger international cooperation and institutional recognition. These initiatives increased political visibility but did not establish a formal mountain work programme.

4.9. **2025 – COP30, Belém:** Mountains and climate change were included as a formal COP agenda item. COP30 adopted conclusions requesting SBSTA and SBI to convene a dialogue in June 2026, including consideration of the need for an annual dialogue. It also requested a summary of discussions to be presented at COP31. This was a significant institutional step, moving mountain issues beyond isolated scientific and political events.

4.10. **2026 – SB64, Bonn:** The mandated Dialogue on Mountains and Climate Change was convened on 12 June 2026, building on the COP30 mandate. Its scope included discussion of whether an annual dialogue should be established, providing a basis for further consideration at COP31. Building on Nepal's preparatory International Expert Dialogue (Kathmandu, May 2024), the SB60 dialogue confirmed the urgent need for transboundary cooperation, systematic mountain observation, and dedicated institutional focus within the UNFCCC process.

4.11. **COP31 therefore** provides an opportunity to build on this progress by considering a regular high-level dialogue, advancing a dedicated work programme, strengthening scientific understanding of 1.5°C overshoot in mountains, and integrating mountain-specific priorities into adaptation, finance and loss-and-damage frameworks.

Despite these milestones, mountain issues remain underrepresented within the core decision-making tracks of the UNFCCC. Establishing a standalone agenda item will ensure that mountain-specific vulnerabilities, adaptation needs, loss and damage mechanisms, and financial resource flows are systematically addressed.

5. Action requested for COP 31: 1.5°C warming in mountains

The intended objectives of the proposed discussion will be to:

5.1. Advance scientific understanding of 1.5°C overshoot in mountains: Initiate a dedicated scientific assessment of the impacts, risks and adaptation limits associated with 1.5°C overshoot in mountain regions, including irreversible changes to glaciers, ecosystems and water systems, to inform urgent climate action and policy responses under the UNFCCC.

5.2. Institutionalize High-Level Dialogue on annual basis: Organize an annual High-Level Political Dialogue on Mountains and Climate Change at COP sessions on regular basis.

5.3. Establish Mountain Work Programme: Initiate process guidelines for a formal UNFCCC Work Programme on Mountain Ecosystems to bridge gaps in observation, climate finance, and global adaptation tracking.

5.4. Integration of Financial and Adaptation Frameworks: Ensure mountain-specific indicators to integrate into the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG), and operational funding streams in the multilateral development funds under climate change convention.