

SCIENCE-POLICY DIALOGUE AND MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS INTERACTION

Rethinking Ecosystem-based Approach (EbA) for water, livelihoods, and disaster risk reduction in the Indian Himalaya

11-13 September 2023 | Almora, India



About the event

ICIMOD, G. B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (NIHE), and the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Government of India, are co-organising a multistakeholder interaction to bring together relevant stakeholders interested and engaged in sustainable land and water resource management, ecosystem services management, climate change adaptation, and sustainable livelihoods. The event centers on two key focus: Firstly, a science-policy dialogue aimed at understanding the policy enablers and barriers in designing EbA-based solutions. Secondly, a multistakeholder engagement to facilitate a shared understanding around knowledge of EbA practices for water, livelihoods, and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). Notably, the event will spotlight protocols for scaling springshed management as EbS to address water issues across the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR).

This event is supported by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)-funded Himalayan Resilience Enabling Action Programme (HI-REAP) under the Climate Action for a Resilient Asia (CARA) programme.

Objectives

In the context of rapid changes induced by climate change, biodiversity degradation, economic development, it is imperative that we rethink the design and implementation of solutions to address societal challenges in a way it is holistic, co-designed, implemented at scale, and helps achieve multiple objectives-including biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, disaster risk reduction, economic development, and sustainable development.

The specific objectives are to:

- Understand how key sectoral policies (climate, biodiversity, forest, agriculture, rural development, water etc) support the application of EbA in India
- Identify policy enablers and barriers to scaling springshed management across IHR
- Develop a shared understanding of the potential and prospect of GESI-responsive springshed management and the design of scaling protocol
- Identify innovative institutional mechanisms and partnerships to scale springshed management in IHR
- Identify promising interventions around EbA for green mountain livelihoods and DRR

Expected outputs

- Agreed draft plan of actions for scaling of GESI-responsive springshed management in the IHR that includes modalities for co-demonstration, capacity institutionalisation, scaling partnerships and mainstreaming
- Suggestive list of EbAs for green mountain livelihoods and DRR and their priorities in IHR
- Key policy recommendations for mainstreaming and scaling EbA across IHR

Background

Today, it is imperative to look at development pathways from both climate and biodiversity lenses, especially in mountainous regions where climate vulnerabilities are high, landscapes and economies are prone to disaster and geo-hazard risks, and where people depend on nature for their livelihoods. EbA has high potential to address both climate change and biodiversity loss. They are approaches to address environmental, social, and economic challenges that involve the conservation, restoration, or enhancement of natural or modified ecosystems.



The intervention on EbA, especially that generate holistic outcomes for water, livelihoods and disaster, will be HIREAP. The HI-REAP programme focuses on promoting regional cooperation and collaboration for policy influence and investment for scaling EbA and actions for clean air (AfCA). Wider adoption of GESI-responsive EbA is expected in three priority sectors: water, disasters, and green mountain livelihoods. EbA in each context will be co-developed with national partners based on country-specific programmes.

In India, HIREAP seeks to develop partnerships that collectively leverage expertise and resources for co-designing and co-implementing GESI-responsive EbA for water and green mountain livelihoods through innovation and scaling, policy engagement, and regional cooperation pathways. It will also emphasise the government's role and leadership in creating enabling policy and strengthening implementation partnerships among various institutions, both state and non-state institutions, to build a wider constituency for adoption and scaling of GESI-responsive EbA in the IHR. HI-REAP also has a regional cooperation component to scale EbA across HKH. The learning and experience from India will add to the effort of scaling EbA across the HKH countries, strengthening the contribution of HKH countries to EbA globally.

**In the HI-REAP, the word Nature-based Solution is used. For India, as advised by GBPNiHE, we are using the term ecosystem based approach (EbA)*