

SAGARMATHA SAMBAAD

A GLOBAL DIALOGUE



CLIMATE CHANGE, MOUNTAINS AND THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY

2-4 APRIL 2020, KATHMANDU, NEPAL





Everest Region

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Sagarmatha Sambaad is a multi-stakeholder forum established by the Government of Nepal to deliberate on important issues of global, regional and national significance. Named after the world's tallest mountain Sagarmatha (सगरमाथा, Mt. Everest, 珠穆朗玛峰), this *Sambaad* (dialogue) is in line with Nepal's consistent policy of promoting global understanding and cooperation through dialogue, consensus building and collaboration. It originates in our deep-rooted conviction and faith in the notions of common good and collective well-being of humanity, especially as the globe is buffeted by challenges of the modern era.

Why Sagarmatha Sambaad?

In today's inter-connected world, there is a need for more dialogues to address contemporary issues and reach consensus on the way forward. Nepal offers a suitable venue for such a global forum, given the country's own record of efforts and accomplishments, including a historic political transformation, the new Constitution which guarantees inclusive democracy and empowerment of women and marginalised communities, contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security, and responding to the urgent matter of climate change.

Nepal is an ancient land with rich natural and cultural heritage. Historically, the Himalaya and its foothills and adjacent plains have been home to sages, thinkers and *bodhisattvas* – enlightened beings who serve humanity. As the ancient Sanskrit saying goes, 'वादे वादे जायते तत्त्वबोधः' (Truth could be revealed through discourses), reflection, mediation and a harmonious relationship with nature have remained the defining features of our various traditions. The ethos of 'सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः' (May all be happy; may all be healthy) remains at the core of the humanist tradition that defines Nepal's polity. The majestic Himalaya of which Nepal is custodian inspires us to think beyond our borders and reflect on global challenges holistically.

Nepal has entered a new era of political stability following the successful conclusion of the peace process and the promulgation by the Constituent Assembly of an inclusive and democratic Constitution. The state's priority now is on inclusive growth, sustainable development and socio-economic transformation. In the international arena, the Government believes in regional and global partnerships to address contemporary challenges and issues impacting the global commons. Over the decades, Nepal has been consistently contributing to UN peacekeeping missions in a substantial way and also is an advocate of global non-proliferation and peace efforts, while making resolute calls for inclusive prosperity and social justice. Nepal, therefore, offers a welcoming ground to bring together a cross-section of leaders and stakeholders for global consultations on urgent issues, to exchange ideas and experiences, and to derive inspiration.

Hosted by Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with the Institute of Foreign Affairs (IFA) and the Policy Research Institute (PRI), the *Sagarmatha Sambaad* series are to be organized biennially on themes of global importance and urgency. The first *Sagarmatha Sambaad* will take place in Kathmandu from 2 to 4 April 2020, on the overwhelmingly pressing topic of climate change.

Participation and Format

As a multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral forum, *Sagarmatha Sambaad* will draw global leaders including heads of state/government, ministers, parliamentarians, policy makers, scholars, experts, journalists, business leaders, civil society activists, youths and individuals directly affected by the themes under discussion. The dialogue format will be open and interactive to enable free flow of ideas and views.



Sagarmatha Sambaad 2020:

Climate Change, Mountains and the Future of Humanity, 2 – 4 April 2020, Kathmandu

Climate change has emerged as an existential global issue posing serious threats to both humankind and nature. Due to anthropogenic emissions, the global average temperature is rising at an unprecedented rate, changing precipitation patterns, increasing the frequency of heat waves, melting icecaps and glaciers, and raising sea levels. The resulting impact on the natural and human systems is unprecedented on a geological scale. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has drawn attention to the catastrophic consequences of not limiting global average warming to 1.5°C, whereas current emission trends put the world on track to a 3-4°C warming by the end of the 21st century. The time window for urgent action to limit warming is indeed short. In the case of the developing world, climate change will not only jeopardize our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, on which so much rides, but will also reverse progress that has been achieved, pushing uncounted numbers of the poor towards further marginalization.

Mountainous countries such as Nepal, facing accelerated warming at high altitudes, are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. The melting of glaciers and changes in the amount and timing of precipitation have profound impact on the ways we organize our food systems and agriculture, on the management of critical infrastructures, including hydropower, and on the availability of water for basic human needs. Changes in the mountains have far-reaching effect across the planet including on coastal regions, small island states and

oceans. Nepal, with its altitudinal spectrum from the Tarai plains to the Himalayan ridgelines in a short distance, has been likened to a 'thermometer of climate change' where one can observe the assault of global warming on natural and human systems like an escalating graph.

Reducing emissions to stabilize the global average temperature is the most important challenge facing humanity in the coming years. Climate change is a crisis that requires a re-thinking on new investments and the models of development. There is a need for transformational solutions that draw on new technologies as well as traditional knowledge and nature-based practices.

Sagarmatha Sambaad 2020 will deliberate on contemporary issues of climate change, mountains and the future of humanity. These include the topics: adaptation, resilience and livelihoods (including food, water, and disasters); green economy and energy (including transport, trade, energy, industry, production and consumption); traditional knowledge and nature-based solutions (including tourism, agriculture, forests and carbon sequestration); and transformational solutions (technology, innovation, lifestyle opportunities, climate justice and finance).

The first *Sagarmatha Sambaad* on '**Climate Change, Mountains and the Future of the Humanity**' is expected to contribute to further strengthening a multi-stakeholder approach to addressing the climate change with renewed political will, new initiatives and investments, and collaborations at the regional and global levels.

Preliminary Program Outline

Day 1: Thursday 2 April 2020

16:00 – 18:00	Opening ceremony
18:00 – 21:00	Reception dinner hosted by the Government of Nepal

Day 2: Friday 3 April 2020

Plenary session 1:

09:00 – 10:30	Ambition for 1.5°C: Urgency for action in mountains and beyond
10:30 – 11:00	Break

Theme 1: Adaptation, resilience and livelihoods

11:00 – 12:30	Parallel session 1: Food and water security	Parallel session 2: Climate induced disaster
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch	

Theme 2: Green economy and energy

14:00 – 15:30	Parallel session 3: Policies for people, prosperity and planet	Parallel session 4: Sustainable business practices
15:30 – 16:00	Break	

Theme 3: Transformational solutions

16:00 – 17:30	Parallel session 5: Finance and innovations in technology	Parallel session 6: Nature-based solutions and traditional knowledge
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Citizens' dialogue: Parallel sessions

Theme 4: Living in harmony with nature

11:00-12:30	Parallel session 7: Cities and communities for green economy
12:30 – 13:00	Break
13:00-14:30	Parallel session 8: Individual actions for sustainable future

Day 3: Saturday 4 April 2020

Theme 5: Global partnerships and regional cooperation

09:00 – 10:30	Parallel session 9: Connecting highlands to islands	Parallel session 10: Climate justice, and the role of women and youth
10:30 – 11:00	Break	

Plenary session 2:

11:00 – 12:00	Way forward for the future of humanity
12:00 – 13:00	Closing ceremony

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A melting glacier in the Himalayan region