

**11 December 2015****PRESS NOTE****Mountain People Facing the Hardships of Climate Change**

The world is marking December 11 as International Mountain Day after the United Nations General Assembly designated the day for the development of mountains and high lands across the globe. Marking the day in Nepal, a home to eight Himalayas out of 14 mountains above 8000 meters in the world together with other highlands has a great significance at a time when melting mountains are seizing headlines across the world.

We are marking this special day while the United Nations Framework for Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (COP-21) is underway in Paris since December 1. With the snow-capped mountains continue to melting, people residing around this high lands are facing adverse impacts in their livelihood. We are already seeing the effects of extreme weather, snowstorms, avalanches on the Mt. Everest and blizzards in famous Annapurna Trekking circle, a mountainous country needs to raise voice about the consequences of climate change to protect and promote the rights of mountain communities in Nepal.

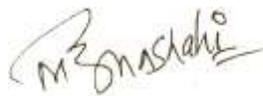
According to International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), mountains cover around 25% of the earth's land surface and host about 13% of the world population and are perennial providers of essential ecosystem goods and services to billions of people living in the mountains and downstream. Mountain region is rich in timber, medicinal and aromatic herbs, and it could have generated substantial incomes to the local people. Those resources, however, continue to remain underused or untapped for centuries due to the lack of development infrastructures, and governments' sheer negligence.

In Nepal, around 77% of total land is recognized as high hills and mountains with fragile mountain ecology but rich bio-diversity and natural resources. In its most recent report entitled "Climate Change Vulnerability Index 2011"

Maplecraft has ranked Nepal as the fourth-most vulnerable to the impact of climate change over the next 30 years while its own emissions make up less than 0.1% of global emissions. Mountain dwellers are more at risk from the negative consequences of Climate Change and the least equipped to withstand and adapt to it.

The lifestyle of people living in mountain and highlands has been largely affected with snow continues to melt there. Tourists are not coming to Nepal as much as they used to visit Nepal earlier. Despite all, tourism contributes Rs 50 to 60 billion annually. The country may lose this amount if mountain disaster continues in Everest and other famous trekking routes. Mountain countries are likely to suffer further if the stakeholders fail to adopt adequate measures to address their woes caused by climate change. Food security of mountain communities is directly linked to incomes generated from livestock production, agriculture, forestry and tourism.

Thus, Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre (KIRDARC) Nepal an NGO working for the safer communities in Himalaya, formed mountain concerned group named as *Nepalese Civil Society Mountain Initiative (NCSMI)* for exclusively advocating mountain issues in Nepal and abroad with representation from all mountainous districts of Nepal. NCSMI will enhance the level of concrete cooperation among all the stakeholders, including the private sector, local communities, civil society youth, and regional and International organisations and Alliances such as Mountain Partnership and Mountain Forum and develop collaborative and cooperative efforts of all mountainous districts and countries about the opportunities and explore the potentialities of mountain region for livelihood improvement of mountain people protecting and promoting their rights.



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