



© WWF-Canon / Michel Gunther



© WWF-Nepal



© Sherub

© Sherub

# Climate Summit for a Living Himalayas Bhutan 2011

## SUMMIT THEMES

Securing **BIODIVERSITY** and ensuring its sustainable use

Ensuring **FOOD** security and securing livelihoods

Securing the Natural **FRESH WATER** Systems of the Himalayas

Ensuring **ENERGY** security and enhancing alternate technologies





# Sacred Himalayas for Water, Life and Culture

## 'Water Towers of Asia'

The Himalayas are known as the 'Water Towers of Asia', with the largest concentrations of glaciers outside the polar region - which hold vast stores of fresh water. Impacts of climate change are affecting all aspects of the climate here - making rainfall less predictable and changing the character of seasons. This is increasing the risk to human livelihoods, their wellbeing and biodiversity. This is topped by increasing severity of extreme events such as cyclones, landslides, floods and dry spells.

WWF sees the impacts of changing climate on freshwater as a major issue, not just in a national context but also at the regional, transboundary level.

The need therefore for Himalayan nations is to increasingly build resilience to the impacts of Climate Change and generate resources for adaptation, capacity building, and technology transfer. It brings attention to the need to re-evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of action at national and local levels. Such action can no longer wait for a global agreement.

In the Himalayas where the impacts of global climate change are manifesting at a rapid pace, the time for action is running

out. That is why:

The Royal Government of Bhutan, along with WWF and other partners proposes to bring together leaders from government, civil societies and academia at a 'Climate Summit for a Living Himalayas'. The objectives of the summit are:

- Securing biodiversity and ensuring its sustainable use
- Ensuring food security and securing livelihoods;
- Securing the Natural Freshwater Systems of the Himalayas; and
- Ensuring energy security and enhancing alternate technologies

Within these four key areas, cross-cutting issues related to natural disasters, poverty, gender and vulnerable communities will be addressed. Furthermore, issues related to research and training, technology transfer, collaboration, information sharing and networking should also be discussed within each theme.

## Key Summit Outputs

Expected major outcomes from the conference: Political commitment at the highest level for cooperation within the sub-region highlighted in a Summit Declaration for:

1. Adopting and endorsing a 10 year road

map for adaptation to climate change in the Eastern Himalayas sub-region for ensuring food, water and energy security while maintaining biodiversity and eco-system services.

2. Securing all of Eastern Himalayas temperate and alpine forests and grasslands.
3. Pledges from partner countries and institutions to fund/commitments of work the implementation of such a road map.
4. Creating and operationalizing a regional adaptation expert groups which will advice governments on emerging concerns and risks.

## Participating Nations and WWF's Role

Focus will be on countries on the south slope of the Himalayas. They include Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal. WWF will support the Royal Government of Bhutan, in its efforts to bring together Himalayan nations for a 'Climate Summit for a Living Himalayas' where heads of Governments of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal are expected to sign a joint agreement on environmental governance to achieve regional cooperation that will ensure a sustainable future for the regions biodiversity and human communities.

For further information please contact:

Name: Savita Malla

Title: Communications Manager-Living Himalayas Initiative

Email: [savita.malla@wwfnepal.org](mailto:savita.malla@wwfnepal.org)

<http://wwf.panda.org/livinghimalayas>