

SCALING UP MOUNTAIN EbA

Using nature-based solutions to adapt to climate change



Healthy mountain ecosystems help buffer the impacts of climate change for local communities, wildlife and downstream populations worldwide. Locally, mountain people rely on their surrounding environment for water, food, pasture and the raw materials that serve as the foundation of their livelihoods. Further downstream, towns and cities depend on mountain water for drinking, agriculture and industry.

Efforts to manage, conserve or restore natural environments can help people adapt to climate change by taking advantage of a healthy ecosystem's natural resilience. For example, programs that enable mountain farmers to sustainably cultivate, harvest and market valuable native crops provide a dependable source of income, promote biodiversity conservation and help maintain healthy soil. Similarly, by carefully managing a mountain watershed, erosion and pollution are reduced and native plant species and wildlife can rebound. This also helps ensure sufficient water supply for local communities and for populations further downstream. **These nature-based solutions are examples of Ecosystem-based Adaptation, or EbA.**

The Ecosystem-based Adaptation approach is widely recognized as an important strategy for adapting to the impacts of climate change. It is cost-effective, yields multiple benefits, and can be implemented by communities themselves. But in mountain areas, on-the-ground EbA measures have not been widely implemented. To help build support for EbA approaches in mountains, both on the ground and in national and international policy, **The Mountain Institute (TMI) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) have joined forces to work on EbA projects in key mountain regions.** The formal title of this three-year initiative is "Scaling Up Mountain Ecosystem-based Adaptation: Building Evidence, Replicating Success, and Informing Policy." It is funded by a grant from the German government.

Our goal is to expand EbA work started during the "Mountain EbA Flagship Programme" in the **Himalayas (Nepal), Mount Elgon (Uganda) and the Andes (Peru)** and to support the EbA approach being adopted in neighboring **Bhutan, Kenya and Colombia**. Our Mountain EbA Program seeks to benefit local people directly, as well as the millions downstream who depend on the water and other benefits that come from mountains. We will also identify and assist conservation and development projects already underway that could benefit from Mountain EbA practices. The EbA experience and data we develop through this program will be instrumental in building wider support and generating financing for EbA within national governments and at international forums.

**For more about Scaling Up Mountain EbA, please visit our websites:
Mountain.org and IUCN.org.**

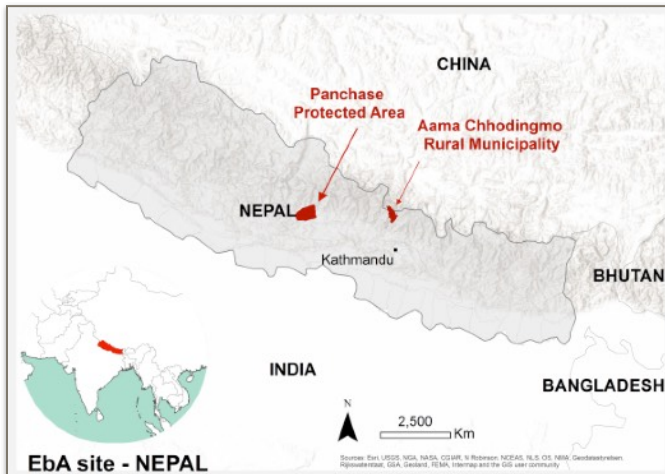


based on a decision of the German Bundestag



Putting EbA to Work in Nepal

The Scaling Up Mountain EbA Program will continue to build on Ecosystem-based Adaptation efforts underway in the Panchase area of western Nepal, and will begin new projects in the Chilime sub-watershed. We will work with communities that are especially vulnerable to climate change impacts. Natural resource



management groups—Community Forestry User Groups, Leasehold Forestry User Groups, Women's Groups and others—will be key to our projects' success. **EbA is an inclusive approach that focuses specifically on bringing women and traditionally poor and excluded groups into the process.** In our project areas, there are groups that have been historically discriminated against, socially and economically, such as the *Dalit*, and indigenous groups including the *Janajatis*. As custodians of local natural resources, these groups are key to conserving mountain forests and watersheds. Their livelihoods depend on a healthy ecosystem.

To identify which socio-economic and environmental factors make local communities most vulnerable, we'll consult with village leaders, local governments

and other constituents in the sub-watersheds. Our next step will be to assist these groups in developing a plan for specific EbA activities that address some of their key vulnerabilities. Our plan is to help communities implement a range of activities to restore and protect local water sources, forests and pasturelands, helping stabilize landslide prone areas and improving local livelihoods.

We will also help build the capacity of government and non-government groups to better understand Ecosystem-based Adaption. This will serve as a more solid foundation for planning and for implementing activities that improve livelihoods and the environment at the same time. Our EbA projects will offer evidence and feedback so that government policies related to environmental protection and livelihoods support can be strengthened and implemented at all levels.



Community consultations in Tetangche village, Nepal.

Mountain EbA Project Collaborators in Nepal

- Government of Nepal Ministries of Population and Environment, Forests and Soil Conservation, Agriculture, Livestock Development, Federal Affairs and Local Development
- The Central Department of Environmental Science at Tribhuvan University
- The Social Welfare Council

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