Press Release: Green Economy and Sustainable Mountain

Press Release

Subject: Green Economy and Sustainable Mountain Development: Kathmandu Declaration (9 September 2011)

From: Nira Gurung <nguru@iciimod.org>

Dear Friends,

Please find below a Press Release, 'Green Economy and Sustainable Mountain Development: Kathmandu Declaration' issued today in relation to the International Conference on Green Economy and Sustainable Mountain Development jointly organised by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Kathmandu from 5 to 7 September 2011. It is also available on our website at http://www.icimod.org/?q=4299. Feel free to disseminate it widely to your networks and others who may be interested in the news. Thank you for your support!

Best regards, Nira

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Green Economy and Sustainable Mountain Development: Kathmandu Declaration Conference addresses new opportunities for sustainable development of mountain regions. (Kathmandu, 9 September 2011) A gathering of 150 policy...
makers, scientists, and development experts from the world's mountain regions have endorsed the Kathmandu Declaration on Green Economy and Sustainable Mountain Development, hoping to ensure the place of mountain systems, in particular in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region, in current global discussions on the environment, economy, and sustainable development.

The declaration was the outcome of the three-day International Conference on Green Economy and Sustainable Mountain Development jointly organised by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Kathmandu from 5 to 7 September. The conference included participation not only from the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region, but also from Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, Latin America, North America and Europe. Right Honourable President of the Republic of Nepal, Dr Ram Baran Yadav, inaugurated the three-day conference. Dr RK Pachauri, Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), delivered the keynote speech. 'Green economy' refers to promotion of a low-carbon economy in the framework of sustainable development. Mountainous developing countries already have low-carbon economies, but they also have an extremely high incidence of poverty. The challenge in mountain regions is to keep these economies low carbon while promoting their sustainable development. The representatives of science, government, civil society, and the private sector who were gathered in Kathmandu pooled their understanding about how the green economy framework can be harnessed to
improve the lives of mountain people and the conservation of mountain ecosystems. They concurred that mountains are global natural assets and support about half of the global population by providing fresh water, energy, floral and faunal biodiversity, food, and other ecosystem goods and services, as well as cultural diversity and traditional knowledge. Economic growth and sustainability in lowlands depend highly on the mountain ecosystem services, directly or indirectly. It is in the common interest of national, regional, and global communities to conserve and develop mountain ecosystem services. Key recommendations in the declaration included the recognition of benefits deriving from mountains; incorporation of the value of ecosystems services in national development planning and decision making; the establishment of global, regional, national, and local mechanisms to compensate and reward mountain communities for the services they provide; the establishment of favourable conditions for improving markets for mountain ecosystem goods and services; inclusion of equity concerns in green economy in mountains; and access to resources and property rights for mountain women, indigenous communities, and marginalised groups. A clear message that came from the conference is that mountains are critical for addressing global environmental challenges and promoting green economy and sustainable development. Participants were of the view that a green economy is an important concept for mountainous developing countries; it has the potential for creating new investments and generating new jobs if mountain-specific approaches are
taken to tap the emerging opportunities. The declaration will feed into the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 2012. For more information please contact: Nira Gurung <ngurung@icimod.org> Communications Officer International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) Tel +977-1-5003222 Fax +977-1-5003277 Notes to Editor ICIMOD www.icimod.org<http://www.icimod.org/> The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, ICIMOD, is a regional knowledge development and learning centre serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan - and based in Kathmandu, Nepal. Globalisation and climate change have an increasing influence on the stability of fragile mountain ecosystems and the livelihoods of mountain people. ICIMOD aims to assist mountain people to understand these changes, adapt to them, and make the most of new opportunities, while addressing upstream-downstream issues. We support regional transboundary programmes through partnership with regional partner institutions, facilitate the exchange of experience, and serve as a regional knowledge hub. We strengthen networking among regional and global centres of excellence. Overall, we are working to develop an economically and environmentally sound mountain ecosystem to improve the living standards of mountain populations and to sustain vital ecosystem services for the billions of people living downstream - now, and for the future.
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