

CALL FOR RESEARCH CONCEPT NOTES

# The economics of nature-based solutions and co-benefits

Deadline: 5 June 2022

## Background

**SANDEE**, an initiative of **ICIMOD** under its Regional Programme **MKAN**, is a research capacity-building network that provides research support to researchers and institutions from South Asia and the Hindu Kush Himalaya (**HKH**) region interested in the interconnections among economic development, the environment, and the use of natural resources.

SANDEE invites concept notes in any area of environmental and resource economics relating to the development of South Asia and the HKH region. Of particular interest are concept notes that demonstrate a clear demand from policymakers for their underlying research, although any innovative research idea within the scope of SANDEE that has scientific merit will be considered. The landmark 2019 *Hindu Kush Himalaya Assessment* – coordinated by ICIMOD under its Hindu Kush Himalayan Monitoring and Assessment Programme (**HIMAP**) – identifies several gaps in the evidence base to take actions to safeguard the mountain environment and improve the livelihoods of people living in the area and downstream. Likewise, the recent *Dasgupta Review* on the economics of biodiversity puts emphasis on conserving nature and accounting for nature's contribution and externalities when economic progress is measured so that nature is protected and conserved. Accordingly, concept notes addressing relevant issues identified in these reports will be of particular interest.

We encourage research on issues of interest to national, provincial, and local policymakers in South Asia and the HKH region, including environmental issues faced by communities following the COVID-19 pandemic. We will consider proposals that examine how nature-based solutions (NBS) could be promoted to address climate and environmental issues that are transboundary in nature and protect lives and enhance livelihoods. This could be in the context of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), Sendai Framework, or examined in the context of urban challenges, such as air quality, energy access/transition, green value chains, landscape and forest restoration, circular economy, and climate change mitigation – ideally looking at how NBS can deliver co-benefits.

## Application guidelines and selection criteria

1. Regardless of whether concept notes submitted in response to this call focus on any of the environmental/natural resource topics, **SANDEE will prioritize the selection of concept notes that have a strong economics component and the dual potential to produce high-impact scientific publications and information that are useful to national-, provincial-, or local-level policy makers in the region.**



2. Concept notes for action research that aims to produce consulting-type reports will not be considered. SANDEE welcomes concept notes that involve interdisciplinary projects, cross-border collaborations, and transboundary topics with a mountain and gender focus.  
  
Please visit <https://www.icimod.org/initiative/sandee-publications/> to view examples of publications from completed SANDEE projects.
3. Researchers from and working in South Asia and the HKH region are eligible to submit concept notes.
4. Principal investigators (PIs) must be junior to mid-career professionals employed by a university, research institute, or other similar institutions in the region, including government agencies and nonprofit organizations.
5. Institutional affiliation of the PI is mandatory for receiving research support. While submitting a full proposal (not needed for concept notes), a support letter from the institution where the PI is affiliated is required for further consideration.
6. Women researchers and researchers affiliated with member universities of the Himalayan University Consortium (HUC) are encouraged to apply.

### Grant size and duration

Grants are likely to be in the range of USD 20,000–30,000 over a **two-year period**. The upper limit grants are aimed for the multidisciplinary teams involving two or more countries in the region, or focus on a transboundary issue.

### Application procedure and deadline

To be considered for the Winter 2022 grant cycle, please review the procedure and submit the application form online at [www.icimod.org/sandee/research-grants](http://www.icimod.org/sandee/research-grants) by 05 June 2022.

### Selection procedure

Applications that do not meet the criteria mentioned in this call will not be considered. Candidates whose concept notes are shortlisted will be invited to submit full research proposals, which will be rigorously reviewed by multiple reviewers. Successfully revised proposals will be further reviewed, and a final shortlist will be formed. PIs of shortlisted proposals will be invited to a research and training workshop to be held in summer 2022, where they will present and defend their proposals for a SANDEE research grant competition.

If you have any difficulty submitting the online form, please write to Manashree Newa ([sandee@icimod.org](mailto:sandee@icimod.org)) mentioning the nature of the problem.

Note: ICIMOD reserves the right to cancel or postpone the call at any time, depending on the availability of research funds.

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