

CALL FOR RESEARCH CONCEPT NOTES

# Economics of natural resource use and environmental change

**Deadline:** 8 January 2024

## Background

**SANDEE**, a research capacity and academic leadership development network of **ICIMOD**, 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. Over the next four years (2023–2026), ICIMOD will be working in line with its new vision towards 2030: a greener, more inclusive, and climate-resilient HKH. It will mainly focus its work in three strategic groups: (1) Reducing Climate and Environmental Risks, (2) Resilient Mountain Economies and Landscapes, and (3) Enabling Regional and Global Mechanisms for Sustainable Action.

SANDEE invites concept notes in the areas of environmental and resource economics relating to the development of South Asia and the HKH region, with a focus on the above-mentioned three strategic areas of work. Of particular interest are concept notes that demonstrate a clear demand from policymakers for their underlying research.

We seek concept notes related to themes set within two of our three new strategic groups:

- Reducing climate and environmental risks – e.g. understanding the socioeconomic implications of (a) a

changing cryosphere, (b) multi-hazard disaster risk reduction, (c) sustainable river basin management, and (d) impacts of air pollution, while also examining the potential solutions and policies from multiple angles.

- Resilient mountain economies and landscapes – e.g. understanding the economics of (a) sustainable and resilient mountain livelihoods, (b) institutions and their responses to enhance livelihoods in the face of climate and environmental changes, (c) valuation and incentive-based mechanisms that help restore mountain ecosystems and biodiversity, and (d) springshed and wetlands management.

We also 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. This could be in the context of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), Sendai Framework, air quality and urban challenges, such as, energy access/transition, green value chains, landscape management, agroecosystems and forest restoration, circular economy, and climate change adaptation/mitigation and loss and damage estimation – ideally looking at how nature-based solutions (NbS) can deliver wider co-benefits and associated economic implications.

## 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 issues, **SANDEE will prioritise 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, but a clear identification of the roles and responsibility of each team member is needed. 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. To avoid conflict of interest, researchers whose relatives are working at ICIMOD, and current consultants are not eligible for receiving the research grant.
5. 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 non-profit organisations. Senior researchers (professors, directors, and other similar level/positions) are not eligible for the research support/grant.
6. 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.

7. Women researchers and researchers affiliated with member universities of the Himalayan University Consortium (HUC) are encouraged to apply.

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

## 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 that requires interdisciplinary team.

## Application procedure and deadline

To be considered for the summer 2024 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 **8 January 2024**.

## 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 at different stages. 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 organised in summer 2024, where they will present and defend their proposals for a SANDEE research support competition. Applicants whose concept notes are shortlisted will be notified by email.

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.

SANDEE is a research capacity and academic leadership development programme of the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). SANDEE supports ICIMOD's programmatic work and strengthens the Centre's economic and policy analysis.

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