

CALL FOR RESEARCH CONCEPT NOTES

Economics of climate risks, natural resource use, and environmental change

Deadline: 31 December 2025

Background

The South Asian Network for Development and Environmental Economics ([SANDEE](#)) is a research capacity and academic leadership development network of the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development ([ICIMOD](#)). It provides research support to early-career researchers and their institutions from South Asia and the Hindu Kush Himalaya ([HKH](#)) region who are interested in the interconnections between economic development, the environment, and natural resource use.

During 2023–2026, ICIMOD is working in line with its vision towards 2030: a greener, more inclusive, and climate-resilient Hindu Kush Himalaya. Our work mainly focuses on the three strategic groups: (1) Climate and Environmental Risks, (2) Resilient Economies and Landscapes, and (3) Regional Action and Global Advocacy.

SANDEE invites concept notes in the areas of environmental and resource economics related to the development of South Asia and the HKH region; of particular interest are concept notes that demonstrate a clear need or demand from policymakers. Further, the concept notes must be aligned with the following [strategic focus areas](#) of ICIMOD's work:

- 1. Climate and environmental risks:** Understanding the economics of (a) cryosphere changes and associated risks, (b) multi-hazard disaster risks, (c) nature-based solutions for disaster risk reduction (DRR), (d) financing for disaster risk reduction (e) sustainable river basin management (e.g. irrigation, drinking water, electricity generation, and upstream and downstream water management), and (f) air pollution (examining the potential data collection and monitoring approaches, health impacts, policies, solutions and communication strategies) and (g) forest fire risks mitigation.
- 2. Resilient economies and landscapes:** Examining the economics of (a) sustainable and resilient mountain livelihoods (e.g., economics of Yak/Chauri herding or rangeland management, nature-based entrepreneurship, economics of climate resilient agroecological transitions, sustainable tourism, renewable energy, understanding the demand for and the cost-benefit analysis of nature-based materials for housing needs), (b) policies and institutions and their responses to enhance green, circular and transformative livelihoods in the face

of climate and environmental change, (c) the economics (including economic valuation) of incentive-based mechanisms that support conservation and restoration of ecosystems/landscapes, (d) economics of human-wildlife co-existence and/ or conflict mitigation and (e) economics (e.g., cost effectiveness) of springshed and wetlands management.

3. **Regional action and global advocacy:** Assessing the impacts of regional/global policies and actions on delivery of climate, environment and biodiversity objectives at the local and/or national levels and in addressing regional and transboundary risks. This area covers issues such as climate change adaptation, mitigation, loss and damage (L&D); conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity including the issues of access and benefit-sharing with Indigenous people; role of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP) in regional climate action and financing. These issues can also be linked to the relevant issues covered under focus areas 1 and 2 mentioned above.

SANDEE supports empirical research and strives to build an evidence-led science-policy nexus. Thus, we encourage research on issues of interest to national, provincial, and local policymakers, decision-makers and practitioners in South Asia and the HKH region.

Application guidelines and selection criteria

1. Regardless of whether concept notes submitted in response to this call focus on any of the climate/environmental/natural resource and development issues, **SANDEE will prioritise concept notes that demonstrate strong economic analysis using established methods, and can lead to publications with the dual potential of impacting scientific knowledge and influencing relevant policies.** Concept notes for action research that aims to produce consulting-type reports will not be considered.

2. SANDEE welcomes concept notes that involve interdisciplinary projects, cross-border collaborations, and transboundary topics with a mountain and gender focus. However, a clear identification of the roles and responsibilities of each team member is needed. You may look up the publications from our completed projects here: <https://www.icimod.org/initiative/sandee-publications/>.
3. Only professionals (e.g. academics, researchers, and practitioners) from **and working in South Asia and the HKH region** are eligible to submit concept notes.
4. Women professionals (e.g. academics, researchers, and practitioners) from and working in South Asia and the HKH region are encouraged to apply.
5. To avoid a conflict of interest, professionals with relatives currently working and / or consulting with ICIMOD are not eligible for applying to this call. Applicants are required to declare it while submitting the application.
6. Principal investigators (PIs) must be junior to mid-career professionals employed by a university, a research institute, or a similar institution in the region, including government agencies and non-profit research organisations. Senior-level professionals (e.g. professors, directors, and other similar levels/positions) are not eligible to apply for this call.
7. Institutional affiliation of the PI is mandatory for receiving this grant. 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.
8. We will conduct due diligence of the grant-hosting institution before awarding the research grant.

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

Grant size and duration

Grants are likely to be in the range of USD 20,000–30,000 over a two-year period. Grants at the upper end of the range are aimed at projects with multidisciplinary teams involving two or more countries in the region or for projects addressing transboundary issues that require interdisciplinary collaboration.

Application procedure and deadline

To be considered for the summer 2026 grant cycle, please review the procedure and fill out the online application form, which you can access through <https://forms.icimod.org/regional-action/sandee-call-for-research-concept-notes-summer-2026/> by 31 December 2025.

Selection procedure

Applications that do not meet the criteria mentioned in this call will not be considered. We are unable to respond to direct enquiries. Candidates whose concept notes are shortlisted will be notified and 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 during the summer of 2026, where they will present and defend their proposals for the SANDEE research grant competition.

If you experience any difficulty submitting the online application form, please reach us at sandee@icimod.org with a brief description of the issue.

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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