



Adaptation at Altitude – Taking actions in the Mountains



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Country/Region

Global (Himalaya, Andes, Caucasus, East Africa)

Adaptation at Altitude aims to increase knowledge on climate change and appropriate adaptation solutions in mountains. It feeds this knowledge into science-policy platforms for informed decision-making in national, regional and global policy processes, in order to increase the resilience of mountain communities and ecosystems to climate change.

Mountain regions cover about one quarter of the Earth's land surface and are home to more than 1 billion people. They provide essential ecosystem services for livelihoods and supply freshwater for irrigation and domestic use for half of the global population. Mountains feature some of the clearest indicators of climate change: rising temperatures, melting

glaciers and changing precipitation patterns are disrupting water flows, affecting ecosystems and worsening natural hazards. And because climate impacts are often more profound in mountains and affect people already confronting poverty and land degradation, mountain livelihoods are particularly sensitive to climate change.

Mountain people have always faced the challenges of living in a harsh environment and have developed coping strategies to adapt to it. But the unprecedented magnitude and speed of climate change puts traditional adaptation strategies under increasing pressure. Innovative and targeted adaptation measures are needed to increase their resilience. Climate change adaptation can provide a triple dividend: avoid economic losses, increase resilience and deliver social and environmental benefits.



Phase Duration

01.12.2019 – 30.11.2023 (Phase 1)

Financial contribution of SDC

CHF 5'405'000

Target groups

The ultimate beneficiaries are mountain communities in which resilience to climate change is strengthened through implementation of adaptation solutions.

Achievements so far

- An inventory of in-situ monitoring infrastructure in mountain regions has been launched and can be viewed as an interactive web-map, with the corresponding data set also available for download
- The Adaptation at Altitude solutions portal features currently 56 tried and tested adaptation approaches in mountain regions and is still growing
- A new regional study on the current state of climate change policies and adaptation strategies in the Andes shows the achievements in seven Andean countries, and raises future prospects
- The programme helped to kick-start the process towards the establishment of a regional institutional mechanism in the Hindu Kush Himalaya region to jointly tackle common challenges

Project Objectives

- Improve availability and use of mountain observation data and information services to support regional and global knowledge products on climate change impacts in mountains
- Establish and strengthen science-policy dialogue platforms at national and regional level to support the integration of mountain specific climate change adaptation into planning and policy processes
- Strengthen knowledge on climate change adaptation opportunities in mountains and inform the development of national, regional and global approaches to increase resilience
- Influence major global policy processes to take climate change in mountains into account

Expected results for 2019–2023

- Mountain observation regional hubs are established in major mountain regions and local monitoring data is made globally available
- Regional science-policy platforms on climate change adaptation are strengthened in 4 mountain regions and nurture policy dialogue on climate resilience
- A community of practice on adaptation in mountains is established that will connect solution providers and users and foster sharing of experiences across multiple sectors and regions

- Synthesized knowledge products on climate adaptation solutions in mountains are developed and shared at the global level

How this will be achieved

The programme will strengthen mountain observation regional platforms in several mountain regions, in an approach that builds on existing facilities, stations, sites and institutions and supports the compliance with international standards to make data available and comparable with other regions.

The strengthening of regional science policy platforms will be done through targeted support to already ongoing or new informal initiatives, such as the Andean Mountain Initiative, the Hindu Kush Himalayan Forum, the East African Mountain Agenda and the Scientific Network for the Caucasus Mountain Region.

Adaptation at Altitude is establishing a global network of climate change adaptation solution providers that links practitioners, planners and policy-makers and provides them access to robust, trustworthy and up-to-date knowledge on tested solutions. Solutions are collected through a peer-reviewed process that involves criteria such as feasibility, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and potential for scaling.

The programme is contributing to the integration of climate adaptation in mountains into the development of National Adaptation Plans under the Paris Agreement, into national disaster risk reduction strategies under the Sendai Framework and into SDC monitoring and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will be achieved by the provision of specific guidance documents on how to mainstream sustainable mountain development in these global policy frameworks.

Additional information

- Adaptation at Altitude programme website <https://adaptationaltitude.org>
- Inventory of in-situ monitoring observatories <https://geomountains.org/resources/resources-surveys>
- The Adaptation at Altitude solutions portal <https://adaptationaltitude.org/solutions-portal>

Partners

Mountain Research Initiative, Consorcio para el Desarrollo Sostenible de la Ecorregión Andina (CONDESAN), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Zoï Environment Network, University of Geneva and Stockholm Environment Institute

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